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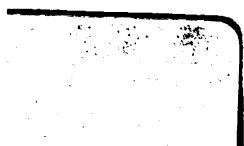
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HURRAH!

SAMUEL G. PROUT.





'HURRAH!'

A BIT OF LOVING TALK WITH SOLDIERS.

BY

SAMUEL GILLESPIE PROUT,

AUTHOR OF "NEVER SAY 'DIE,'" "WHOSE LUCK?" ETC.



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THREE CHEERS.

ISAIAH xlii. 11, xii. 6 ; PSALM xlvii. 5 ;
DEUTERONOMY xxxii. 4.

I.

HURRAH for our grand, strong Rock !
For the fortress old,
That none can take, and none can turn,
And a few of us can hold.
It looks up to the sky thro' the cloud-rifts high
For our Colours' fold.

And down where the mists creep coldly
Around the foe,
Its mighty roots strike boldly
As deep below.
No mine can reach, no battery breach
Our Rock, we know.

Up with it again ! ye men on the Rock—
A mighty cheer,
That shall wake the voices of the hills
Afar and near ;—

That the sullen foe in his camp below
Perchance shall hear ;—
The Rock ! the Rock ! our grand old Rock,
Where none may faint nor fear !

We were standing by our silent guns, on the mountain's
height,
And the arms piled by flashed back to the sky its early
light.
In our fortress' far, chill shadow, where the rock fell sheer
below,
Swayed the restless black ant-myrriads of the toiling foe.
They had pushed their vain approaches all through the weary
night—
Yes, they looked a hand-breadth nearer, swarming into
sight.
Gazing, silent as their batteries, a stern pity in their smile,
Our fellows watched the enemy a little while ;
Marked their fresh guns in position, and where burst each
foolish shell,
Sent at our grey Rock-fortress, where never a shot could
tell.
Then a cheer of mocking triumph, as from one man's lips,
rang out—
No upturned face might our glasses trace—no, they could not
hear the shout ;
But the circling eagles poised above, and stilled their screams
to hear
From the fort that none could scale nor scathe, the joy of our
bursting cheer—
The Rock ! the Rock ! our grand old Rock,
Where none may faint nor fear !'

II.

And in the swelling triumph
Was struck another chord,
At the thought of One then in our midst,
And the memory of His word :
For some of us were there, He led
In the close of a stormy day,
When the calm, high brotherhood of dead
Round the well-kept Colours lay ;
And over the field so sternly fought
The clouds of battle had grandly caught
A light of victory.
Then rang our Leader's word
Down the awful hollow ;
As He breasted that tide on its fire-swept side—
Thro' the scream, and the roar, and the rattle heard ;
His one word—‘ Follow ! ’
And He was there among us,
Whom we honoured and loved so well :
Himself a Rock in the battle's shock—
Must not our cheer that flung back fear,
Of our Captain tell ?

III.

‘ Men ! silence ! our dear Leader
Comes up the rock alone :
Our loving cheer has reached His ear—
And—hush ! He lifts His own,
A memory of that dread battlefield
Where, they tell, He fought alone ! ’
And as one spoke, our Leader paused
Where we stood by our silent guns ;

Such a glad smile came when rang out His name
As tho' all our hearts were tongues.
And so to the sky that shout pealed high
In the golden morning light :
I am sure the foe must have heard below,
For we shouted with all our might :—

' The Rock ! the Rock ! our grand, strong Rock,
That none may daunt nor dare !'
And we heard again His calm victor-strain
Through the splendour of our ' Hurrah !'

'HURRAH!'

CHAPTER I.

'HURRAH!'

'THAT'S not in the Bible.' No, the word isn't; but the ring of it is. Suppose we turn to the story of that most strange siege of a city, 'great, and walled up to heaven,' as those cowardly scouts, who never saw its fall, described it,—in the border fighting of the children of Israel, that we read all about in the history of the campaign, written by their brave and skilful commander-in-chief, Joshua, who had been in the same reconnaissance, and now sat down before the doomed walls, a little more weather-stained it may be, but as grim and stern in their massive uplifted strength, as he had looked upon them, unfearing, forty years before. Those were wonderful siege operations, were they not, that the fifth and sixth chapters of Joshua's history tell us of? To many of you who will read my little

book, the facts will be familiar ; but I do wish you'd read those two chapters again, there's such a deal of teaching for all of us in them. It's such a real picture, too. Can you not see the garrison and townspeople leaning over their strong, high walls, ridiculing the solemn procession of trumpeters and priests, as seven times it slowly circled round the city ? 'What a number of times they're going round, round, to-day, blowing those foolish, noisy horns of theirs ! There—they are stopping at last.' Ah ! but those clumsy, discordant horns they made merry over, were *God's* 'rams' horns ;' there were silver trumpets in the camp, but He would use those horns—here, I think, is *one* of our lessons. Can you not almost hear the sudden shriek of dismay and frantic despair that replied to the 'great shout' of the hosts of Israel, as that strange march halted, and their high, massy walls lay in ruins, and before that mocking garrison could stand to arms, the enemy's thousands were in their streets ? 'And it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city' (Joshua vi. 20). Don't you think that 'great shout' was a hearty Jewish 'Hurrah' ?

Many another such shout, doubtless, pealed over the battlefields of Canaan, and in the camp at Gilgal, during that year's severe campaign; and in later wars, we may be sure, the ‘Hurrah’ of the men of Israel, that struck terror to the hearts in lost Jericho; rang across the fords of Jordan, and from the heights of Tabor, down the Vale of Kishon,—and woke the echoes of Jezreel, and was heard above the clash of steel and the roar of flame, in many a smitten city of Midian and Ammon. Those cheers have no record; but we may listen to yet another Bible ‘Hurrah,’ on a very memorable occasion. It was during a long and harassing war with the Philistines, some centuries after those wars of conquest, and when the great general Joshua, who made the sun and the moon stand still (Joshua x. 12), and the walls that fell down flat, were stirring stories of old times, told in the homes and by the camp-fires of Israel—that a young man, who had left his home in the little town of Bethlehem in the early morning, arrived, it may have been, just as the mists lifted from over the mountains of Judah, at the outposts of the army under King Saul, in which his two brothers, whom, by his father's command, he had come to visit, were serving, and which was entrenched on one side of the narrow valley of Elah, the

enemy being in position on the opposite height.

Just at that time Saul's forces were sadly demoralised, through the challenge, day after day, of a Philistine champion, Goliath of Gath, whom no one cared to meet in single fight. As David came within his countrymen's lines, an action evidently was about to begin. The Philistines apparently were in the open, and the Israelites were streaming out of their trenches to attack. We read (1 Samuel xvii. 20), 'The host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle.' It seems though their hurrahing was soon silenced. We all know the events that followed—how, while the stripling was talking to his brothers in face of the enemy, whose whole force we may suppose, was being pushed forward; Goliath came up, and, as on previous occasions, defied the armies of Israel. If David had come down, as his jealous brother Eliab had said, 'to see the battle,' he certainly was disappointed—he saw none that day; for, I'm sorry to say, the men of Israel, who had just cheered with such spirit as they left their trenches, 'when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid.' An hour or two later, when Goliath's head was brought into camp, and the Philistines in turn were in full retreat, they could hurrah again in the pursuit;

they ‘shouted,’ very likely, all the way to Ekron.

Now, I hope that in these memories of old world fighting, I’ve justified the title of my small book, as not altogether unbiblical; because, you see, it’s a *Bible talk* we are hoping to have. I only wish we were sitting together up in a battery, or at an outpost; it would be wonderfully nice (that’s not at all a military word, I’m afraid), and what we are going to talk about *would come so real*. Many who will read the familiar word on our title-page, have felt, and have helped, its power on the field; and have taken a tighter grip of rifle or sword-hilt, as the cheer rang along the line. Just imagine that in some new issue of Service regulations, it was enjoined on every general of division to impress upon the troops under his command, that all cheering in presence of the enemy was strictly prohibited! Don’t you think there would be sad disobedience to orders to report? Well, I trust, my dear friends, that, like the men of Judah we read of in the 13th chapter of the second book of Chronicles, who ‘gave a shout’ when ‘the battle was before and behind,’ you will ever have the same good cause they had for cheering,—‘God Himself is with us for our captain.’ Right through the fighting and the marching of the life’s campaign,

I pray that *their cheer* may often rise in your hearts, and burst from your lips.

As a rule, men do not cheer when they're down, but when they are up and fighting, or meaning fighting; and I trust that all of us who are having this bit of a talk together, are either with the one or the other. I know one thing, that, whether in camp or on furlough, in uniform or in 'mufti,' soldier or small-book writer, the battle is before and behind every one of us; though we get not a glimpse of the foe, which makes it all the worse for us, and, if unsupported, we shall surely come to grief. Many of us, indeed, have nothing to do with Martini-Henries or Gatlings, sabres or bayonets, but we *all* have to do with *fighting*; and we all, if we will, may have 'the Lord mighty in battle,' our King and Leader, 'continually' at our right hand. If the *battle* is 'before and behind,' so is God the Lord; and by our side, and in our midst (Psalm xxiv. 8; Isaiah lii. 12; Psalm cxviii. 6; Zephaniah iii. 15).

To that general of old, who commanded in Canaan, were spoken words of high heartening and cheer; we read them in the early part of his history (Joshua i. 9). Had they only been said to him by the great leader under whom he had served, and who had just gone home, Joshua

might have thought those two words in his instructions on taking the chief command, ‘Be strong,’ very strange ones. Now, however, those words of his old commander come to him direct from God Himself. ‘... of good courage.’ We understand *that*, even as spoken by Moses to Joshua, or by friend or chief to one of ourselves. A man can put a stress on himself in the matter of his nerves—can ‘screw himself up’ to an ugly bit of duty; but he can’t ‘be strong’ to order, when, perhaps, every bit of strength has been taken out of him by stern work or unlifted pressure. ‘The Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.’ Ah, *that* will do for Joshua, and it will do for us. That ‘is’ and the ‘whithersoever’ assure to us, as they assured to him, all the strength we can ever possibly need. We are ‘without strength’—are not ‘sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves’ (Romans v. 6; 2 Corinthians iii. 5). Another hard fighter, brave old Paul, tells us that, and he conveys to us in New Testament teaching, the same strange-seeming command that was given to Joshua, and the same all-explaining strength.

He spoke from experience: the Lord had stood with him when he was left alone in the strife; and when he says, ‘Be strong,’ he would say, ‘These were God’s words to *me*. I have often

needed "the power of His might," but I have never wanted without having it; *in it* I can face any odds, and get the better of them.' 'God would never tell you to be strong,' the apostle would say to us, 'if He did not mean to make you so.' He does not forget to finish the other text—he might not—without an *all full* assurance—'but our sufficiency is of God.' Yes, a helping strong hand in ours—*there* is the secret of every success,—and we *must have it*. 'Without Me ye can do nothing.' These are our Captain's own plain words; so don't let us think we can do *just a little* by ourselves. And it does not follow, that our bravest going or doing even then shall be brilliant. All we really have to trouble ourselves about is the succeeding; with a firm grasp of a trusty hand, we may creep safely over many an awkward place to the post of duty, that we might not, however gallantly mounted, ride over with cheer and waving hand, for the bystanders to admire our boldness and skill.

But there is a very curious thing the apostle tells us—that when he was weak was the very time he was strong. A wonderful truth that! When a man is complacently conscious that he is full of vigour and pith, when he pulls himself together, and feels that he is 'up to anything,' he certainly will not be seeking the

aid of a strong arm to eke out his own want of muscle. But you see St. Paul was thinking of a far more formidable enemy than Philistines or Roman legions,—one against whom all his sturdy strength would be simply worth nothing at all. He *must* have a might not his own; and so, as nothing but *God's strength* would be of the least use to him, the sooner he plainly told himself that he really had none of the right sort in himself, the better; and *then*, 'strong in the Lord and in the power of His might,' in the 'strength' brought out 'perfect in weakness,' he says, without a shadow of doubt as to results, 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.' Why, there's the very ring of a cheer in those grand words; there was surely a 'Hurrah' in the heart of the noble soldier of Christ who uttered them (2 Timothy iv. 17; John xv. 5; 2 Corinthians xii. 10, 9; Ephesians vi. 10; Philippians iv. 13).

CHAPTER II.

'LET US—FEAR.'

'WELL! of all things to put at the head of one of *our* chapters!' Yes, it does read oddly, but they're no words of mine,—this time my heading is really in the Bible, in the fourth chapter of Hebrews,—so we had best look carefully at it, hadn't we? Let us go back to that promise-command given to the leader of Israel's armies. We note these words, strange indeed, addressed to a man of such known fearlessness—'Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed' (Joshua i. 9). The place that they come in is just the only place where they could have come. Had these been *the first* in his instructions, they would have been unaccountable words for the Lord to speak to His servant whom He had proved and commended. Joshua be 'afraid,'—be 'dismayed?' Why, giants and walled cities had no fear for *him*! 'Grasshoppers,' with God's leading promise, were, he knew, more than a match for all the Anakims

of the land. And if the words had *followed* that assurance of God's never-failing presence which we lately read, they would have been yet more amazing—they would have indeed, suggested what could not be. But this dauntless general, whose instructions were to conquer Canaan, with troops he could not altogether depend upon, had just received, you remember, that strange command, ‘Be strong;’ and the thought might well have insisted on being heard, in something like the words of those other two grand fighters we have already spoken of—‘My soul *is* cast down within me.’ ‘Who is sufficient for these things?’—and *then* comes the pledge of lifted courage and never-faltering resolve, that ends the verse. Something for us all, dear fellows, here (Psalm xlii. 6; 2 Corinthians ii. 16).

We have not yet got to the three words that head our chapter—we soon shall—but don't you all agree with me that we may just a little suspect the complexion of that courage which vaunts it never knew a tinge of fear? The fact is, where there is no consciousness of danger, there's no real bravery in meeting it. I do so like a story I remember hearing at the time of the Crimean War—you know, this is a talk, not a tract, so I may tell it exactly as I heard it—of a boy-ensign who had just joined, and who was

under fire for the first time at the Alma. When his colour-sergeant said to him confidentially, in the press up the hill, 'I wish, sir, you'd go to the rear, and let me take the colours—I'm afraid your white face will discourage the men;' his reply was, *pegging on up the slope*, 'You go to the rear yourself, sergeant; I can tell you, if you'd been in such a jolly funk as I have, the last half-hour, sergeant, *you'd* have gone to the rear long ago.' Real courage that was, of the very best quality; and, let me tell you, as we press up the steep slopes of heaven that Satan holds so strongly (Matthew xi. 12), we shall need, all of us, *just the same* courage as that brave boy's on the slopes of the Alma.

But while bravery is fully recognised in the Bible, where 'mighty men of valour' are often spoken of; and the gallant soldiers who 'jeopardied their lives unto the death—in Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo,' are specially 'mentioned' in that grand song of Deborah's—what a 'despatch' that was!—where the cowardly divisions of Reuben are branded in words of scathing contempt (Judges v. 15-18): in this, as in every other matter, we will be careful to get the true Scripture standard. Nobody has any sympathy with Reuben, Dan, or Asher; all will honour Zebulun and Naphtali. A coward, whether in the battlefield, or in barracks, or in

a drawing-room, is a poor thing, there's no doubt of it; but suppose we find out what *is* a coward, and what *isn't*. There is no cowardice in fearing the wrath of God; more, we have the express and repeated command, emphasised by our Saviour Himself, to fear, ‘*Yea, I say unto you, fear Him.*’ ‘I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about,’ says David—a startling ambush that, too—but the same unflinching soldier is not ashamed to confess, ‘*I am afraid of Thy judgments*’ (Luke xii. 5; Psalm iii. 6; cxix. 120).

‘What on earth is there to be afraid of?’ How often have we heard that contemptuous query? Well, nothing, really; but a great and terrible deal *beyond earth*. We ought to be afraid of judgment and of hell! You would not call that man brave, but mad, who exclaiming, ‘*I’m not afraid,*’ sprang into a glowing lime-kiln, or flung himself down a mine-shaft. If he walked into either, you would believe he was blind. ‘Either blind or mad,’ would be your unhesitating verdict—no fear, because no recognised peril. Had the man possessed but a glimmer of mental or of bodily sight, he would have shunned the awful danger, and you certainly would not have called him ‘coward’ for doing so.

And the man who has just gained a glimmering consciousness that there is something very dreadful before him he has recked nothing of—that his rapid step is nearing the eternal gulf—is he a coward, because, close upon its awful edge, before he has grasped a Hand 'mighty to save,' he shudders at the half-revealed horror—because, ere he has gained the hope of heaven, he has upon him the dread of hell? I might not dare to call such a one by the hateful name, even though in the overwhelming of that 'horrible dread,' he faltered in the trench or the column. The dishonour of that branding name is terrible—worse, ten thousand times worse, than earthly suffering or loss. Yes, all that,—but the alternative of an eternally-lost soul is so tremendous! Does the mere mention of the shameful word insult you? I can't help it. I really hate to write the word; but you see, you're being very angry with me is such a *very* small matter, in the thought of God's eternal wrath upon any one of you (Isaiah lxiii. 1; John iii. 36).

'Does he want us to be afraid of death, then? Pretty soldiers we should be.' No, that I don't. I want you, all of you, to be—well, just as brave as you are, ninety-nine out of the hundred of you. I would have you with no more fear of death than of drill;

but I want your courage to be the true, safe, ready-for-anything courage *they only can have*, who have taken a grip of the Hand that never lets go, and out of which none can pluck : the courage that Joshua, and David, and Paul had. Remember the madman's leap. Not to fear death is not necessarily, to be ready for death !

You dear fellows, do some of you, be awfully afraid of your own bravery ; be quite sure it's *the right sort*. Indeed, you want God with you : if He is not by your side, Satan is feeling for your hand. Look here at this text, ‘My covenant was with him of life and peace ; and I gave them to him *for the fear wherewith he feared Me, and was afraid before My name.*’ These are the words of Him who says, ‘Fear thou not—be not afraid.’ ‘*Let us* therefore fear.’ You will find the words that head our chapter in Hebrews iv. 1. We are to be afraid of coming short of ‘Rest,’ at the end of it all,—of missing heaven !

It's just this. You must fear, you *have every right to fear*, let the mad and the blind shriek ‘Coward !’ if they will, until you have taken hold of the Love that ‘casteth out fear,’—till you have Christ. Then—ah, well—a cowardly Christian is simply absurd. What indeed, ‘on earth,’ or out of earth, can he possibly fear,

who has the Lord, the Strength of his heart, always with him, and his 'portion for ever'?

The word may reach you that reached some warriors of old, 'Ye shall not need to fight in this battle.' *Then* you must just hold your hand, and let God do all the fighting for you; perhaps just when you're thinking what a wonderful stand you are making, and how much honour you will get; inaction is often far harder than keeping on:—but *till that word reaches you*, you and the Lord of Hosts fight together. 'God and I against the world!' What a grand thought that is; *isn't* there a splendid 'all right' feel in it? (John x. 28; Psalm lxxiii. 23, 26; Malachi ii. 5; Isaiah xli. 10; 2 Chronicles xx. 17.)

But how about the enemy? There can be no battle without a foe. We have been taking it for granted that if we are fighting at all, we are on the winning side,—but such a solemn thought comes,—'the enemy' may be God! We read in Israel's strange history this startling warning-cry, 'O children of Israel, fight ye not against the Lord God of your fathers.' *They were doing it*; what *are* we doing? 'He that is not with Me, is against Me.' God Himself has put it thus plainly for us. Are we quite sure that we are *with God*? (2 Chronicles xiii. 12; Matthew xii. 30.) Quite sure? We can-

not pretend *not to know*. Was there ever a soldier in this world who did not know *which ranks he was in*? If we are not with Him, we are with Satan, in the miserable insurgent ranks that have got beaten again and again, and *always will be beaten*: against the Lord of glory, who never lost a battle, nor a man. He Himself asks, 'Who would set the briers and thorns against Me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together' (Isaiah xxvii. 4). A poor rabble of half-armed rebels drawn up in battle formation against the Lord and the power of His might, its whole extent commanded by the heights of heaven!

'Burn them together'! I should think so. Fancy a swarm of naked savages, behind their poor little stockade of plaited briers, defying a compact body of troops, with half-a-dozen guns in position. Why, the first shell would set the whole contemptible concern in a blaze. Dear friends, are *we* behind just such defences? It's an awful look-out for us, if we are. It is declared of Christ, 'All things shall be subdued unto Him' (1 Corinthians xv. 28). *You*, if you are fighting against Him—*Satan for you*, if you are on the Lord's side.

It is strange, certainly, that people should go to war, in the hope of, sooner or later, *making* the peace one would think they might just as

well *keep* : still, though it seems a curious assertion, I suppose we may say that the end and object of all fighting is to bring about, what at all events, goes by the name of a peace. It may be one-sided and unsatisfactory, and it may not be permanent—is, perhaps, least likely to be the last, when the quarrel has not been fairly fought out,—but peace is the hoped-for and *fought-for* end of it all. Now, let us finish the passage in Isaiah we have just been reading. We saw there was not a hope of security in those miserable 'briers and thorns'—and see, the Lord, who, if those insane rebels persist in fighting, must burn up the wretched defences and destroy their defenders, comes down to them with a flag of truce!—'Or let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me;—and he shall make peace with Me.' What a strange way of concluding a peace—to take hold of the foe's strength! Yes, but then the Foe is God; and He knows with sadness that those arrayed against Him are fighting a lost battle—that *fighting it out* in their case, means their certain and utter destruction; and He 'is not willing that any should perish.' God is fighting us poor sinners only because we are *with Satan*, and the war between God and Satan knows nor truce nor pause. But *to us*—'to him that is far off, and to him that is near'—

away in the far rear of the vast hosts of darkness, or in the front ranks—there is His free offer of ‘peace,’ and too, of the sorely-needed ‘strength’ *to get the good of it.* Only, *holding on to God*, can we make our fearful way to the other side of the field. ‘As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked;’ and here—we must not miss *this* thought—grieving that our mad obstinacy seems resolute to lay upon Him the necessity for His ‘strange work;’ with the yearning thought—‘It may be—that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin;’ God says, ‘*I would* go through them—I *would* burn them together’—not ‘*I will.*’ What a mercy that is! But, the word is, ‘*He shall* make peace with Me.’ On this last question of peace, one thing let us ever bear in mind. We hear often of the ‘Peace at any price’ party. *God’s* peace, freely and fully offered to all, is not to be had at ‘any price’—only at the price He Himself put on it, and the Lord Jesus Christ paid for it. ‘*He* is our Peace,’ says God’s Word of His Son; and if we in our terrible folly, are fighting against *God*, the peace made ‘through the blood of His cross’ is the only possible ‘peace and safety’ for us—our only possible escape from ‘sudden destruction’ (2 Peter iii. 9; Isaiah lvii.

19; Ezekiel xxxiii. 11; Isaiah xxviii. 21; Jeremiah xxxvi. 3; Ephesians ii. 14; Colossians i. 20; 1 Thessalonians v. 3).

'Fighting against God!' some of you may say; 'no, no, it's not so bad as that. We don't profess to be "soldiers of Christ," and all that sort of thing; but we're not *fighting against Him*.' Yes, but you are, though, if you are not *with Him*: there are not two words about it. There are no neutrals. Jesus Christ's own words that we have just read, make away with *that* vain hope. You may not be in the front—very likely not. I'm not sure that makes it any the better—if not, you're with the reserves. The devil does not put all his men forward at the first—he will bring you into line when he wants you. You have on his uniform, and you must take his pay when—well, when your term of service is ended. Satan lets none of his wretched troops go without their pay, those that tarry by the stuff nor those that go down to the battle. Many of us, whichever service we *now* are in, have already had terrible value for those horrid advance-notes of his—the arrears he pays, *after the last defeat*! I say, my friends, we'll none of us remain under that awful command, will we? There's no desertion, nothing mean nor unworthy, in going over. We were swindled into taking that service—it's

returning to the colours. What wonderful mercy, isn't it, that God *lets us come back*—those soiled rebel facings yet upon our breasts? We may wear degrading scars—we shall hold our heads low before the loyal and the true; but one thing I'm sure of—we shall never commit that fatal blunder of despising the enemy, whose terrible leader we ourselves have served under.

Do you know? I think sometimes an appalling smile must glow on that dark leader's face, when he hears us 'make fun' of him, and speak in ribald jest of 'Old Scratch' and 'Old Nick,'—and looks round upon those uncounted thousands of the strong lost angels of heaven, whom he drew from their high places to follow his fearful leading! Could we but have seen *our comrades and our commander*, we should have fled out of the ranks without a moment's pause; but I think we should shudder ever to speak lightly of the foe.

But when we were in Satan's army, what were we fighting for? Those men whom Joshua led of old, whose 'Hurrah' in victory we thought we heard, were fighting to get Canaan; and the men of Canaan were fighting to keep it. It was a 'goodly land,' and worth the struggle. *We* were fighting—some of us *are* fighting, a bitter battle—to reach and scale those gloomy walls that fall to eternal depths in the 'mist of darkness' on the other side,—to

hear the taunts of those who finished the dire fight a little before us, and the awful welcome home, that 'the strong among the mighty shall speak—out of the midst of hell' (2 Peter ii. 17; Isaiah xiv.; Ezekiel xxxii. 21).

I cannot pause on such fearful words as these. Men, you must never, never listen to that awful greeting! The cheers of heaven—don't you think *they* will be worth hearing, as welcoming comrades throng down the golden streets and bear you 'through the gates into the City—her light like unto a stone most precious;' and above the triumph of their gladness, you hear the voice of your General-King, 'Bravely done, good and faithful servant'? How you'll wonder at the words, when you remember what a poor, poor fight you made of it (Revelation xxii. 14; xxi. 11; Matthew xxv. 21)!

CHAPTER III.

'OBEY ORDERS.'

THE story belongs to the Sister Service, but it is such a good one, and applies so splendidly to us all, that I must begin this bit of our talk with it. The captain of a fighting frigate, long before the days of ironclads, whenever a youngster joined as midshipman; would have him on the quarterdeck, and make him this little speech, 'Now, young gentleman, I wish to impress upon you that there are three things you will have to bear in mind, while you are on board the ship I have the honour to command—the first is, "Obey orders;" the second is, "Obey orders;" the third is, "Obey orders." You may go.' Now all those whom I am happy in talking to, know what it is to 'obey orders'—short, sharp, and decisive—without questioning them; and a simple, brief command will come more natural, and will gain a more ready 'ay,' than a sermonised text.

'Nowthou art commanded,'—that's how the old

Egyptian king began his instructions to Joseph about the arrangements for his father's journey (Genesis xlv. 19). That got before all objections, you see, because *he was the king*. Even the general commanding-in-chief gets his instructions from his sovereign; but none can give orders to *our* General, or supersede those He gives. 'The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of glory' (Psalm xxiv. 10); and His commands come clear, and strong, and never to be mistaken—like a trumpet call.

But before we listen to God's words of command, let us be 'certain sure' of this—that He never gives one we cannot obey. In Her Majesty's Service, when the command to form or to advance, rings out, who ever dreams of saying, 'I can't,' if he is able to be in the ranks at all? How very droll it would sound! Every man believes he can do what he is commanded to do, and *goes at it*; though with all his best doing, he may be repulsed. No chance of a repulse, none, in obeying the orders of 'the Captain of our Salvation,' with every command, He gives the power to fulfil it. You remember His 'Be strong,' that came to Joshua with his instructions, 'Have not I commanded thee?' And what says David, who knew what fighting was, if ever any man did? 'Thy God hath *commanded* thy strength' (Psalm lxviii. 28).

No, not a man would say, ‘I cannot,’ when voice or trumpet-note gave a command—would any one say, ‘I will not’? One or other we must say to God, if we do not obey His orders.

Mind, I am not now going to *preach at you*. I am not even going to reason with you, or to plead with you, from God’s Book of Instructions: I simply bring to you—it’s none of mine—the word of command; if you think of it, it really is a grand thing to *get orders*, in this ‘critical-moment’ life of ours.

After one of the later disastrous actions of the Franco-German war, a battalion of *Mobiles* who had retreated in certainly anything but good order, and who came crowding into a village a few miles from the field, that had just had the Prussian broom through it, were twitted with ‘want of starch’ in abandoning the capital position they had held. The excuse made by the unfortunate fellows really seemed conclusive, ‘We got no orders!’ Well, *we* have got them, and here is their first note, ‘Repent—God commandeth all men everywhere to repent’ (Ezekiel xiv. 6; Matthew iii. 2; Acts xvii. 30). We none of us, of course, can obey an order we do not understand; this is a plain one-word order, easy enough to make out the sound of—‘Repent!’ What does it mean? May I put for it another very familiar one,

'Right about—Face'? Now, that just expresses the Bible command: I don't know any other words that would do it so exactly. Repentance is not being sorry for sin; we shall be *that* when we have obeyed our next command. Nor yet, fighting against sin; how *are* we to do that with our faces set straight against God? To repent, in the language in which the New Testament was originally written, means neither more nor less than to change your mind—to *turn it and yourself right round*.

On a dark night, a man is, as he thinks, making his way back to camp; stepping out resolutely on what he quite believes to be the right road. As he turns the shoulder of a hill, he sees the sudden gleam of a watch-fire, and hears the flow of water that certainly should not cross his path. Why, he is walking right into one of the enemy's outposts! 'This will never do,' the man says to himself, with that queer feel upon him of an uncommonly near miss; and he wheels round sharp, and off at the 'double quick,' back along the road he had come. *That's just repenting*. It doesn't want much explaining, dear fellows, does it? That dark road leading away from heaven, as straight as it can go, towards Satan's lines! Are not many of us on it? 'Halt!' that's your *following command*:—Do you not hear it? *You may*

not be able to stop at the last turn, when the rush of a dark river is in your ear, and you catch the terrible gleam beyond !

And as you halt, you will hear another word of command. We are told much, and we cannot hear too much, of the ' Gospel Invitation ; ' very amazing and very gracious it is ; but you know a Royal invitation *is a command*. Anyhow, it's an understood thing between us, that what I have now to do, is simply to convey to you the orders of our King and Leader.

' This is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ ' (1 John iii. 23). Oh, that word ' Believe ' ! How people do let it bewilder their brains and trouble their hearts, instead of *just obeying orders*. God's trumpet cannot give an uncertain sound ; if it rings out ' Believe ! ' those who hear, *can do the thing*, whatever it is, be sure of that. ' I don't believe you : '—We all feel the words dreadfully offensive ; if we say, ' We *can't* believe you,' it really makes very little difference, there is a doubt of some one's truthfulness, anyhow. The Bible itself is very plain spoken on this matter, as on every other. ' He that believeth not God, hath made Him a liar ; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son.' I say, dear friends, is

not that a very solemn consideration for us? The man who does not believe, not only disobeys the word of command, but tells his commander he is a liar! What would the Articles of War have to say to such a speech?

Believing is, very simply, taking some one's word; and the *One* here is 'the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity;' and what He bids us take His word for, is this, that Jesus Christ has done for us everything that must be done, and that we cannot do for ourselves. That word *for* is a very wonderful one. The Bible 'for' is, indeed, *everything to us*. We must wait till we get right out of these earth-mists, to see all its marvellous meaning, but let us make it out as clearly as we can. We read in God's Word these plain declarations—'The soul that sinneth, it shall die;—there is no man that sinneth not; all have sinned.' Putting the texts thus together, where are *we*? And, at the same time, thrice God says, 'Why *will ye die*?' 'Turn' (our first command, you remember), He says again, 'and live ye.'

Now, here *does* seem a dead lock. We are quite sure that God would never mock us; but what *are we* to make of it? His words, first given, leave for us no hope in the others.

There comes in an amazing, precious 'for,' to meet us in our terrible perplexity and our dire

need: ‘He hath made Him sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.’ All of wrath the sin could heap upon our souls—all of joy it could for ever keep them out of—we escape, and we have, in Him who was made ‘sin for us.’ I said I would only bring you *God’s orders*; but here, I *have to bring His prayer*—‘We pray you, in Christ’s stead,’ says Paul, ‘be ye reconciled to God.’ And, dear friends, shall not this wondrous condescension of our Leader but deepen the force of His command? (1 John v. 10; Isaiah lvii. 15; Ezekiel xviii. 4, 20; 1 Kings viii. 46; Romans iii. 23; v. 12; Jeremiah xxvii. 13; Ezekiel xviii. 31, 32; xxxiii. 11; 2 Corinthians v. 20, 21.)

The words in this second command of ours are most remarkable; we are to believe on *the name of Christ*. What gives value and authority to a deed, a cheque, or a despatch? *The name signed to it*. It is a very common expression, ‘Oh, his name is good for any amount.’ The ‘amount’ of things we want very badly for this world and for the next, is something amazing. We have got to ‘live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;’ and we sadly want the power to do so. We have got to stand before the ‘great white throne,’ and we want to stand there without one shade of fear. We

have got to live for ever, and we want to live that for-ever life in heaven; and for all these vast, deep wants of ours, God tells us the name of His Son Jesus Christ is 'good.' 'Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.' Now, *that takes it all in.* A good many of us will say (or think, anyhow), that we do not so very much care about being saved from *them*. What we want—yes, we do want that—is to be saved from hell. *They're the same thing*, my friends. Do get hold of this great truth, that God, who 'so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish,' *sends no soul to hell.* He has done all that even God can do, to keep us out of hell. He wants every one of us up with Himself in Heaven; but, 'there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth.' They who stand in His presence are 'holy and without blemish;' not the very tiniest shred of sin can go into heaven. You may say, 'Oh, that's really nothing; God will not condemn me to hell for that little sin!' He will not. That little sin will keep you out of heaven, that's all; in the light of the Judgment seat *it will show awfully.* There stands God's 'shall,' and we cannot get away from it. I do wish you would just look out for yourselves a few of God's *shalls*—say, in the first of the

prophets and the first of the evangelists, Isaiah and Matthew; and would say to yourselves over them all—warning-shalls and promise-shalls alike—‘Of course, if God says this, He means it;’ it would, I believe, be worth a deal of this talk of mine (Titus ii. 12; Romans xiv. 10; Revelation xx. 11; 1 Corinthians xv. 53; Matthew i. 21; John iii. 16; Revelation xxi. 27; Ephesians v. 27).

We must do something with these sins of ours, or they will do something awful with us. They cannot go into heaven, that’s certain; and *we* have to go out of earth; and there’s not an inch of standing ground on the other side of the river, and Satan claims all the sins that come across! It is, indeed, a dreary, hopeless look-out for the lonely soul. The soul would be welcome—oh, how welcome—in heaven! but the sin, black, foul stain, or speck, cannot go in; and *that* must go where alone out of earth sin can exist,—and the poor soul must take it there!

And we can take *nothing but sin*. If we have anything whatever with us, it is *sin*. Does that seem a ‘hard saying,’ to some ‘good’ men? Well, this text clinches it, ‘All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.’ You don’t think *that* clothing would do for the King’s palace, do you?

This, then, is what you are *commanded* to have—Salvation from your sins, and *so* from hell, through the ‘Name which is above every

name,' and than which 'there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved'—the name of Jesus Christ, who is 'the author of eternal salvation unto all them that *obey Him*' (Isaiah lxiv. 6; Philippians ii. 9; Acts iv. 12; Hebrews v. 9).

To the man who, in obedience to the command, believes in the name, God never can refuse His gift of salvation, because He has said He never will; but do not, I beseech you, get hold of a vague hope that God will save you 'somehow,' lest you never get saved at all. All through the Bible you will find no one word of promise to any who do not believe on Jesus Christ, but any number of promises to all who do. 'Only believe.' This is the command of Christ Himself. The just obeying it gets rid of that tremendous difficulty about the sin, because it gets rid of the sin itself. As we have seen, Christ's way of saving us from our sins was marvellously and beautifully simple. He took them all, to the end of time, *upon Himself*, and paid down their full penalty, that only His own self *could meet*. Neither God's justice can claim, nor Satan's demands touch, the sins that are brought to Christ. He has ever that deep awful *purchase-right* to them; and now, as we bring the horrid things to Him, *He takes them from us, and casts them behind His back*, where they

shall be 'sought for' by our soul's enemy, but 'shall not be found.' Bring every bit and scrap of sin that you feel, or find; *do not keep one by you*, lest you forget it. If you do, *there the sin is* in God's book, where it wrote itself down when you committed it, all the same; and you cannot touch it; only One hand can turn the terrible page, and blot out the sin—His who paid for it.

He 'who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree,' who was '*made sin for us*,' must *judge* the unbrought sin that comes before Him: all sin has *once* to come before Christ, either to be *taken from us*, or to *go from Him*. How shall *ours* come? Do not let any of us think that fatal thought—God is very good, and will 'let us off.' He *is* 'good to all,' but God never let off a sinner yet, and He never will. 'Him that cometh,' sins and all, He 'will in no wise cast out,' but those whom He will not 'cast out,' He 'will not at all acquit.' The debt we owe to His justice has to be paid 'to the uttermost farthing,' and we must either pay it ourselves, or find some one to pay it for us—and we can do neither. What! will not Christ pay the debt for us? No, He will not. He *has paid it*. He 'emptied Himself' once, to pay it; it never can be paid again (Mark v. 36; Isaiah xxxviii. 17; Jeremiah l. 20; 1 Peter ii. 24; 2 Corinthians v. 21, 10;

Psalm cxlv. 9; John vi. 37; Nahum i. 3; Matthew v. 26; Philippians ii. 7).

I do not think you would greatly pity the man who lay in jail for a debt, because he would not claim the sum, many times its amount, deposited for his release; or who starved and shivered through the winter, sooner than accept from one who loved him, full supplies of food and clothing! The righteousness of Christ is 'unto all and upon all them that believe.' He Himself has said, 'Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die,'—but just as plain and strong stand the words, 'He that believeth not the Son shall not see life:' the *shall*s meet us everywhere. Oh, we *must not* make a mistake here—it would be a mistake in our eternity (Romans iii. 21; John xi. 26; iii. 36)!

And, too, we are saved from *the sinning*,—from the terrible power, as well as from the fearful doom, of sin. Ah, dear fellows, we do so need *that*. We learn from the song of old Zacharias, in the first chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, that through Jesus Christ we are 'saved from our enemies.' Being saved *from our sins* is just that. Are not our sins our enemies? I should think they are. Why, all our life's fighting, if we fight at all on God's side, is against our sins, and every one of them has got to be killed! They are the very closest up of

all Satan’s forces ; and they will be awfully too strong for us if we have not the Saviour by our side. Let us make quite sure though, that we *are* fighting them ; slipping and falling, it may be, but struggling up, with a firm hold of the Hand, and fighting on—*always* fighting on—*no white flag* among your appointments. And there’s no turning the devil’s position ; you’ll have to meet him in front,—but Satan *must give in*. ‘Resist the devil,’ we read, ‘and he *will* flee from you’ (James iv. 7).

‘Never say “Die,” when the night lingers longest !

Never say “Die,” when the foe musters strongest !’

There may be no ‘Hurrah’ on your lips in the breath-pauses of the close, stern fight—*that* may be only for its close ; but *we have Christ’s name down for it*, that we shall cheer by-and-by. We read in the book of Revelation of some grand exulting warriors, who overcame Satan ‘by the blood of the Lamb,’ and of others, whose ‘loud voice’ is heard in the victory-song of heaven, who had ‘washed their robes white in the blood of the Lamb’ (Revelation xii. 11 ; vii. 14). That blood had washed away the last sin-speck that would have kept them out of the city ; and its cleansing from all sin, its *keeping on cleansing*, swept from the field foe after foe, till ‘the last enemy,’ grim old Death, was not worth a lifted hand to parry his blow.

CHAPTER IV.

'I'M GOING IN FOR HIM—HARD.'

'THANK you; I don't go in for that sort of thing.' A bit of a tract offered and refused—that was all. I wondered what he *did* go in for; I wonder what each of you dear men is going in for! I do like the words, somehow. They're by no means elegant, and I suspect their origin is not quite respectable; but there's an 'I mean to' ring in them. I would almost say that going in for some rather foolish things, is better than going in for nothing. The one man, in the course of his vigorous folly, may hit himself so hard against something, that it brings him up; and when he gets over the stun, *he turns round*; while the other moves on, serene and stupid—his life 'just a fulishness'—till he gets in death's way, and is knocked down.

The things men 'go in for,' ranging, as they do, from a Victoria Cross to a ticket-of-leave—if they would not quite count up the men them-

selves, would make much too big a count for this small talk of ours ; only, should you at any time hear it said, very likely rather contemptuously, ‘Oh, *he* goes in for *religion*,’ just you get hold of that man, and question him pretty sharply about those strange ideas of his. You’d think the men dreadful fools, who, starting on an expedition in which they could get no supplies whatever, went in for any amount of barometers, theodolites, books, chess-boards, and mining-tools,—but for no provisions! ‘I say, that would be going in for starvation, wouldn’t it?’ Of course it would, just that, and it’s what *we*, very many of us, are going in for. Nothing wrong, very likely, in the other things ; all good enough in their way ; only, they were no good at all, without food ! Have we gone in for the one only thing that will be of the very least use to us, when all the rest is—it must be—left behind, just so much lumber, dropped on the journey, or at the crossing !—the one thing God has set His heart on our having, and has given us ‘commandment’ to have ?

But how about some who took with them on that expedition, nothing but poisons and filth ? Really, I need hardly ask what you think of those men ; the question is an affront to your intelligence. Well, there could, of course, be but one opinion ; but shall we quietly ask our-

selves, what *are* the things that some of us have with us in the life-journey?

And now, we are going to listen to our third command. That poor fellow whose words, spoken to me not very long before his death, head our chapter, had heard it. The talk was of Jesus Christ and His marvellous, untiring love. The worn, pain-drawn face had in it the light rather of resolve than of gladness; the wailing voice was like a child's, but the words were strong—'I'm going in for Him—hard!' (They're almost *Bible words* too. David said very much the same thing, Psalm lxiii. 8.) Ah, friends, that weary old sufferer, all unconsciously, was grandly obeying the command. This time our orders come straight from the lips of Jesus,—His Father's royal command, and His own. Here it is—'Life everlasting'! Christ *knew* what God willed for all us poor sinners. 'I know that His commandment is life everlasting' (John xii. 50). *Isn't* this third order of ours a wonderful one?

'Repent.' 'Believe.' 'Have eternal life.' Thus, our three commands have reached us. How was my poor friend obeying the last of them? He was 'going in hard' for *Christ*. What does our Lord say of Himself? 'I am the life.' So, in the resolve of the weary heart that he

would have Christ, he gave that poor heart's truest obedience. He was laying hold on eternal life.

The same strong, 'for life' soul-grip is expressed in the words of one, now, through two 'years' slow count,' joyously *at home*, with her King,—the true beauty of whose *full* life was in its grand, loyal consecration. 'So utterly horrid,' she once wrote, 'not to have been altogether for Him.' In one of her so prized letters to a friend, given in her 'Memorials,' she says, 'I do wish people would but trust Christ *out and out*.' Don't you like that?

We must have Christ, no matter what else we have, or have not; our *knowing all about Him* will not be of the very least use to us. I've heard people say, when listening to the marvellous story of God's love for us poor lost sinners, 'Dear me, that's beautiful reading.' It's *precious having* we want. 'What earthly good' to me to have the most correct knowledge of the nature and composition of bread; all about wheat-germs, and gluten, and starch, and fermentation, and the rest of it, if I was starving for want of a loaf; or to be learned in the geology and mineralogy of the grand rock that towers above me in its saving strength, while I am in the plain, at the mercy of the enemy? And what heavenly good to us, to

know all about Jesus Christ, historically and even theologically, if we do not know *Himself*, as Paul did? 'Lord, evermore give us this bread.'

'Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.'

Are not *these* the prayer-words for each of us?

Our dear Saviour never sorrowed for Himself, in all the mournful years He passed on earth. He only grieved that men would have none of Him! 'I am come that they might have life;' and then comes His yearning lament—I say, dear friends, *is it said to us?*—'Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life.' He is 'the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever;' and even in the never-pausing triumph-joy of Heaven, surely there passes beneath the many crowns upon our Leader's brow, a shade of sorrow, when you or I 'will not' obey this amazing 'commandment.'

How can we obey it—how get 'life everlasting'? Does not that pathetic text just quoted give the answer?—'by *coming for it*. It is simple enough. There is so much said about *coming*—all through the Bible—very little about going. Here are a few places to refer to—Isaiah xxi. 12; xxvi. 20; xlviii. 16; lv. 1-3; Matthew xi. 28; xxii. 4; xxv. 34; John vii. 37; Revelation xxii. 17.

It is often said, and preached, and sung, that we have nothing whatever to do—'Jesus did it all, long, long ago.' Surely we may make a mistake about this great and very precious truth. Christ has, indeed, done for us *all the saving*; but we have to do the *coming*, which is the believing—our second command, you know: they are one and the same thing. Christ tells us to come to Him for life; and that if we believe on Him, we have life. Only thus, indeed, do we *get* life. But just look at these words—'that *believing* ye might *have life* through *His name*.' See how beautifully our orders fall into one another (2 Timothy i. 12; John vi. 34, 45; xiv. 6; x. 10; v. 40; Hebrews xiii. 8; John xx. 31).

'The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord' (Romans vi. 23); and it is His command that we accept it. Do not let us for one moment think that this stupendous gift of His salvation through Jesus Christ, is a cheap and an easy thing, because it costs us but the coming for it. It cost GOD all that even He could give—all the unsearchable riches, and all the unfathomable joy, of His own heart and home! That 'so' in the 16th verse of the 3rd of John, that we have already read, bids us see the cost,—in the Love that gives us 'everlasting life.'

We said, you remember, we all have got to live for ever; and we proved this by reference to the chapter and verse where occur these solemn words, 'this mortal must put on immortality.' There is no getting from under the grasp of that 'must'; and the tremendous thought comes—this immortality may be no 'gift of God,'—only an awful, eternal necessity of our being. Your mortal, my mortal, everybody's, 'must put on immortality;' but they only have 'life everlasting,' who have it in obedience to God's command. What are we to say of those who never, in all their lives, so much as listened to a command of His? 'Poor fellow, he's no more,' you say of one who, it may be, but a few hours before, stood by your side; whose laugh woke yours; who noticed, with interest like your own, familiar sounds and objects, and talked, perhaps as lightly as you now do, of those real, solemn things, *he* now knows all about! What is he doing now? To what voices does he listen? Who met him at the crossing-place? 'No more!' If these words are spoken of one who would not come to Christ—would that it were so, that it *could be so*. Were they now spoken of you and of me; in the gloom, or in the glory, should we have said—'And *this* is never to end!'? My dear fellows, do look this thing in the face. Soldiers are accustomed to

look things in the face, but this is so ghastly a certainty to meet alone! There *is* a life, upon which might we for a moment look, no smile might ever cross our lips again.

There is a fourth command that we may not pass by; and we must listen back for it to our second, of which we only heard the first and loudest note. ‘This is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ,—and love one another.’ ‘That’s a curious command,’ some one may say, ‘to give to soldiers.’ Not a bit of it; but, curious or not, it’s God’s command to us all—and so to you. ‘Love one another!’ Why not? Why should men, the tools of whose trade are rifles and rammers, sabres and bayonets, be less able to love, than those who have, as theirs, axe or drill, plane and saw, or trowel; lancet, or sextant, or pen? From those old days when Abraham made his forced night-march from Hebron to Hobah, and, with a few hundred picked men, routed the gathered forces of the four kings who had made a successful raid into the plain of Jordan, down to our own, much that is wrong in this out-of-joint world of ours has, unfortunately, to be set right by dint of hard hammering, and the blows must fall heavy, to shake out the rivets, as to fasten them. Wherever our

duty lies, whether in soldiers' work or masons' work, building walls or knocking them down, the workmen assuredly may bring to it *loving* stout hearts, with strong, steady hands. Not only may, but must; it's 'Now, thou art commanded,' to each one of us. When, after the day's duty, the soldiers' tools are piled and cornered, I'm sure that among those who have wielded them through a hard day, there will be found in the tent and by the watch-fire, as simple and child-like hearts, as among those who have plied the others.

As to talking about 'glorious war'—it's not 'glorious' a bit. War is an awful calamity: the thing in itself is detestable, and they who have borne themselves most bravely in its duties, most deplore its terrible needs; and we all pray for the time when 'the Lord of Hosts' shall reign 'the Prince of Peace;' but so long as, unhappily, there is fighting that must be done; while our hearts warm to the memory of Havelock, and Lawrence, and Vicars, and Shadforth; while, too, we think of many, yet, thank God, among us, who would never let their names be given—loving, loyal servants, alike of their God and their Queen—we shall not doubt that war's sternest bidding may be obeyed by men who have, too, obeyed our fourth command.

'He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me:—if ye love Me, keep My commandments.' *That* is how we have to *begin the loving*. Now, many of you would say—*Love Christ!* You really would much like to do so; but, no, you could not dare to say you do love Him. Have you, however imperfectly, obeyed those three other commandments? If you have, be sure, dear friends, that, in your unquestioning obedience, He has seen your unconscious love. But you want to *know* that you love. There's a simple rule for getting that knowledge—a Bible one, of course; to 'know' that *He* loves. 'We love Him because He first loved us.' 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;' 'When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son;' God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' And let us always bear in mind that 'us' means *you* and *me*. Paul, with his strong, *empty-handed* grasp of Christ, for his own self, says, in another place: 'Who loved *me*, and gave Himself *for me*' (John xiv. 21, 15; 1 John iv. 19; Romans v. 10, 8; Galatians ii. 20).

Died for! We will say that over and over again, till we get 'hard hold' of it—'*Christ died for us.*' Say you were down on the field,

with a shattered limb and a dazed brain, hopeless of rescue, eye and ear getting dim and dull—the battle-whirr in the distance might be the hum of the old mill-wheel, or the murmur of the sea in the valley-mouth, at home:—There came a quick hoof-fall, a tinkle of scabbard and stirrup-iron,—and a comrade, dismounting at your side, lifted you, in spite of all your protestings, into the saddle, and closed your nerveless fingers on the bridle, and forced his charger to the gallop, as the pursuing enemy showed over the crest of the hill: that would be *giving himself for you*—in a Bible word, ‘salvation.’ And as, in your own compelled safety, you pictured your friend standing up to meet the levelled spears, you *would know his love*; and very sure am I, that, in the remembrance of his calm, high look, and last words, pleading with you to accept the life that gave him death; the love would flood your own heart. Ah! and if you had *wronged* that noble comrade of yours? . . . Alone, on so awful a battlefield as none of you can ever know; for your sins and mine, denied His Father’s strengthening presence, that *we* may always have,—Christ met the powers of hell ‘for us;’ who had *made Him ‘to serve’ with our sins*, had ‘*wearied Him with our iniquities*. Dear fellows, shall the memory of that mighty self-giving Love, move none in these wretched, dull,

cold hearts of ours, for Him who so, 'first loved us'?

'And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also.' Here we get back to our command. Not, indeed, the same in degree, as the love we bear for a dear side-by-side comrade, or friend of many years; this love here commanded us, is to be the evidence and overflow of our gratitude-love for God. Your 'brother,' mind, is anybody and everybody. 'The enemy?' Yes, of course, that's easy enough—only 'the enemy,' you know, while he has his tools about him; but, too, what is not so easy, 'your enemies'—we have a *text* for it. Yet one other thought comes, as we glance again at our instructions—'Tender-hearted, forgiving one another, forbearing one another in love;' and it is this. In disobeying our fourth command, we also disobey our third—'He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death;' but we *must not abide in death*. How about that 'life everlasting' we are *commanded* to have? (Isaiah xliii. 24; 1 John iv. 21; Luke vi. 27; Ephesians iv. 32, 2; 1 John iii. 14.)

And while we are talking about love and tenderness, 'and all that;' there is something very much on my heart, that you must, please, let me say. I do so earnestly desire that the dumb creatures God cares for—'His

tender mercies are over *all* His works' (Psalm cxlv. 9)—should get a deal of good from the love of God shed abroad in your hearts (Romans v. 5). Of course, a cruel Christian is simply a monstrous impossibility; you might just as well speak of an immoral or a dishonest one, or of a cowardly hero. As somebody has admirably said, 'Cruelty is the devil's trade-mark.' When a man is cruel, we know at once whom he does business for; and terrible will be the reckoning, if the account is not taken out of the dark master's hand, before the Judgment is set, and the books are opened. I am not, however, supposing that many of those with whom I now talk, would be guilty of deliberate cruelty to a dumb animal,—I quite believe that might you cast one shuddering glance on the hideous tortures,—atrocities which *might make Satan repudiate his own 'mark'*—that under the plea of Science, are deliberately perpetrated, and coldly recorded, in his service; you would hardly be restrained from summarily avenging the speechless agony, you could not bear to look upon;—I hope I am talking to brave men. If ever you see a man doing a deliberately cruel act, fight shy of him; he's a flincher, depend upon it: I would not have that man with me in 'a fix,' for the world.

But if you are merely indifferent to brute suffer-

ing; your *not caring about it*, may sadly prolong, what you would never yourself inflict. Never speak or think lightly of such suffering, even if you cannot see your way to alleviating it. It is, I fear, to some extent, inevitable, in the exigencies of duty, like much besides, that makes the heart sad. Guns must be brought up; stores or ammunition have to reach a point without delay, in spite of every obstacle. At such times, though you may be sharing the fatigue, and may have your own pain or weariness to bear; keep in mind that all your dumb comrades *were pressed into the Service*, and do all you can to make their 'hard lines' a little easier—be they horses, mules, oxen, or camels. Why, just the shifting of a galling buckle, or the lifting a yoke, or a 'rough and ready' bit of padding that takes you barely five minutes, may save hours of cruel pain to some poor toiling four-footed companion of your march; less than the same time may give a swift or an easy death, for one of lingering agony.

I need tell no cavalry man what a thing it is to have his charger his friend; but do always bear in mind that *love* is the strongest thing in the world for men and dumb animals alike. I have ridden, with immense enjoyment, more than one much-wronged 'vicious brute,' that had brought to grief far better horsemen than myself, by just

remembering *that*. I do love the dear dumbies; yes, *all of them*. I'm not a bit ashamed to say it; and I *so* want you all—though the 'one another' here, may seem *rather* a wide bearing—to get them all within the scope of *our last command*; its spirit takes them all in, if the letter does not. There are many more *commands* I would like to bring, and to talk about: I seem to have but 'dipped into' God's Order Book; but I fear to tire you. I hope I have not done so already, as there's a good bit more I should much like to say to you.

CHAPTER V.

‘HE HAVE STRENGTHENED ME A LOT.’

It's only about a poor little Welsh woman ; but she has a grand lesson for us. That *was* a sad home. I think, indeed, I might hardly call the desolate cottage by the canal side, out of which all the light had been darkened, a home ; for it was in poor Abercarn—where between two and three hundred husbands, sons, and fathers lay in the deep, far gloom of the shattered pit, beneath their own sad dwellings, that the touching words were spoken ; and in all that stricken village no more crushing weight of sorrow had fallen. In broken talk, the story came to me, and upon trembling lips, but from a brave and trusting heart,—the story of the terrible hours in that early September morning of 1878, in which the poor woman walked as in a fearful dream, up and down the road between her cottage and the pit, where her husband and her two boys *yet lie*.

Things had been 'very grey' in the poor home for some time. A turn of work now and then—'living and starving.' Still, it was a home. 'This have finished me,' were her first words to me, when the stony grief found speech. 'Now they be gone; it be all gone.' And then she told me all about that wild, weary walk of hers. 'I be bound to go, if I fall on the road. I do think—not thinking; I want to be told more than they can tell me—then I do go quite lost.' When in my visit to those shadowed homes, with their closed shutters, and rigid, tearless faces, that were almost too terrible to sit beside, I next saw my poor friend, she told me how night closed in that 'cloudy and dark day.' Her own words shall again tell the story:—'I could see them all sitting there. My boy—I could see him in his place; and there's the big chair, and nobody in it. I say, "It *can't* be true—all down there! The best of husbands; my beautiful, good boys—gone? How foolish I be. I must run and look." I do try my best, but the sorrow do take me.' And then came the words, which brought to remembrance the grand, smitten-down old patriarch's strengthening of himself in God, 'It's only the love of Christ do keep me up. *He have strengthened me a lot.*'

May a loving God, dear fellows, keep those

whom you love, from black, desolate sorrow, such as hers. I have told its heavy story, because it says better than any poor words of mine could say, *what* strengthening there is in Christ. *He only* could strengthen that dear woman in her lonely sorrow, because He knew all about it. *He had borne it.* There is a wonderful thing said about Jesus Christ in the fourth verse of that altogether amazing fifty-third chapter of Isaiah—a very wonderful thing indeed, which God would not have us miss; and so He calls our earnest attention to it by the word 'surely;' as though the Lord would say, 'Strange as it is, this is true, *upon My word*'—'Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.' Just as surely as 'the iniquity of us all' was laid on Christ, so surely, did He take our very griefs and sorrows upon His own heart. We say, 'I go to that friend for comfort, because he can understand my grief; you see he has gone through much the same thing himself.' Not 'much the same,' but that very grief itself, whatever it may be, has Christ borne, or the Bible makes a mistake. He knows every thrill of sorrow that poor human hearts can feel; and just as surely as His arms were round that desolate-hearted woman as she sat in her empty home, so surely will He be with you and yours in any and every sorrow, if you have obeyed

orders, *as she had*, and will strengthen you—yes, 'a lot.' So don't try to do without Him, when 'the sorrow do take' you; only let it take you close up to Himself. Neither you nor I can do without Jesus as our Sin-bearer; why should we drearily think to do without Him as our Grief-bearer; and crouch down helpless and hopeless, under the burden of some crushing sorrow too heavy for us to bear alone? But oh dear! I've made a huge mistake in speaking of that little Welsh woman as '*desolate-hearted*.' She couldn't be *that*, crushing and bitter as was her grief,—*by the Bible*. In that most 'comfortable' thirty-fourth Psalm we read, 'None of them that trust in Him shall be desolate,'—*and she was leaning on 'Him.'*

And in the most bitter, the most unbearable sorrow of all, the sin-sorrow, that *takes* us with a far more terrible grip than any other, go straight to Jesus; you *must* have Him with you in *that*.

I don't know how it is, but I think I have made a sad forget in this bit of talk of ours. We have spoken much of obeying God's commands, and of coming to Him, but we have never clearly made out *how* we are to come. 'God is in heaven and thou on earth.' We cannot, of course, come to God as we might have come, had we stood in the street of that Gali-

lean town, and heard the tender voice offer rest to all the weary and heavy laden. But since God wants us all with Himself, we may be sure He has not left us without a way of getting to Him. When we ask God for something we *really do want Him to give us*, and *praying* is only just *that*; we *come to Him*. You see, if I find myself talking with you, I must have come—I must be in your presence, or how could I be speaking to you? No need for me *to see you*; in the dark, or with blind eyes, I should have *come* just the same.

And this prayer-coming has even one advantage over actual coming. At any moment, and however closely engaged you may be, it is available. We say very often, in some tight pinch of difficulty, 'Now, if I could only go to that friend of mine, he would put me all straight.' *As the trouble is coming up*, we can go to our Saviour God, to Him who makes 'crooked things straight,'—and He will *be with us to meet it*.

Since pray we not only may, but must, God has taken such pains to let us clearly know that He hears us. 'They shall call on My name, and I will hear them; I the Lord will hear.' And what do you think of this—'Thou shalt cry, and He shall say, Here I am'? 'O Thou that hearest prayer,' is how David addresses that God unto whom 'shall all flesh

come.' 'In the day of my trouble,' he says again, 'I will call upon Thee, for Thou wilt answer me;' and says his answering Lord, 'He shall call upon Me, and *I will* answer him.'

'Do you mean to tell me, then, that God will give me anything I ask Him for?' No, I don't say that; more, I am *sure that He will not*. It might truly, dear friends, be a terrible thing for you and me if He did. See, *here* is the rule of prayer and answer: 'This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.' If our will is with God's will, so one together, that we want to *have* just what God *wants to give*; then, it is the thing asked for that comes. It is worth remark that in our Saviour's words, which we read in Mark xi. 24: 'What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them'—the word 'them' is not in the original, in either member of the sentence;—'shall have' the 'things' God pleases to give you, and knows to be the right things for you.

Anyhow, if God makes you *perfectly happy* without the thing you asked for, you could not be more than that, could you, if you had it? 'In everything by prayer and supplication with

thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. . . . And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus' (Isaiah xlii. 16; Zechariah xiii. 9; Isaiah xli. 17; lviii. 9; Psalm lxxv. 2; lxxxvi. 7; xci. 15; 1 John v. 14, 15; Philippians iv. 6, 7).

The Bible is promise-full for all the coming ones; but, indeed, indeed, you must say something to God now, if you would not be speechless before His judgment-seat! Don't believe one word Satan says. If he can only keep a soul from coming to Christ, till he comes close up with Death, to claim its sin—Death comes *alone* to none—he knows that soul is his. He is sure to tell you one of two things: either that you have nothing to bring to Christ, or that you have more than He will take. He'll find 'Bible,' too, for it all, no doubt. The devil preaches awful sermons to our poor souls from God's texts—sermons with terrible half-truths in them. 'Listen!' he will say, 'Thou hast destroyed thyself—thy Bible says so. God is a just God—He tells you so Himself. What is there for *you* there?' Satan will never finish either text—will never, if he can help it, let you know that God is your 'help' and your 'Saviour.' Oh, no! keep all that dark. 'Wash you; make you clean,' he will say to the soul

sick with its own foulness :—‘That is written ;’ and he will bring it down to one or other of the ‘rivers of Damascus’ for the washing ; he will seek to fold back the page that tells of the ‘Fountain,’ where the robes were washed of those, who are in his own lost home of light and love (Hosea xiii. 9 ; Isaiah xlv. 21 ; i. 16 ; 2 Kings v. 12 ; Zechariah xiii. 1 ; 1 John i. 7 ; Revelation vii. 14).

Whatever Satan may try to keep from you, however sin and self would persuade you ; take this, my dear fellows, as your soul-certainty—*you cannot do without Christ*. What? you *are* doing without Him? Yes, now—Poor doing it is, if not bad doing ; but—let God Himself ask the question—‘*What will ye do in the end thereof?*’ The pass may not be once asked for, till you have crossed the river, and hear the souls challenged at the City’s gates ; without it none enter in ! Nothing need, nothing *must* keep you from coming to Jesus : *the old command rings out*. It may be awful work : they who *kneel to fight* are in the front rank, and Satan leads terrific charges. We may seem to ourselves as men cut off,—the fierce, foul grasp upon us, as it were, wrenching us from our knees. Ah ! and we almost feel that we *should let Satan* do this :—our prayers for holiness, and Christ, and heaven, go up through

a seething mist of vile thoughts and hateful desires. As in the terribly mingled utterances of that naked demoniac who met our Lord among the tombs, through whose quivering lips the unclean spirits and their victim urged their confused beseechings; through *our* agony of prayer may shriek the devil-cry, ‘What have *I* to do with Thee, Jesus?’ till we hardly know which is speaking, the torn soul or Satan!

Yes, it is very awful, dear brothers. *I know it is*;—it is not too awful for Christ. In the black, hopeless horror of that dire hour we may be afraid of ourselves:—*He* is not afraid. ‘Is anything too hard for the Lord?’ No, not you, nor I: were it so, I should not now be speaking to you:—‘I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins:—I have laid help upon One that is mighty—the Lord—thy Saviour and thy Redeemer—mighty to save’ (Amos v. 12; Psalm lxxxix. 19; Isaiah xlix. 26; lxiii. 1). Take it all, the fearful *all*, to Jesus. Do not be afraid of giving Him too much to do; only do your own little—Come: anyhow; *only come*. At its hideous worst, it is just—sin. You can make no more of it, even as of your holiest living, and deepest love, and calmest, happiest prayers, you can make no less; and still those words of our dear Saviour’s remain strong, a vantage-ground that all the hosts of

Satan cannot beat you from : ' All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme.'

God will take any sort of a prayer from us poor sinners, so long as it is the cry out of our hearts : ' O God ! whom I have grieved, and spurned, and crucified,—whom I crucify afresh—Save me utterly !' Under the fierce mastery and the cruel memory of our sin, *this* may be the best we can say for ourselves. That prayer will do for Heaven. The man who utters it, knows himself simply lost—helpless, hopeless, unsaved, and undying—and must fling himself off, into the unebbing wave of God's love, that will float him up home (Jeremiah v. 31; Mark v. 1-20; Jeremiah xxxii. 27; Genesis xviii. 14; Mark iii. 28).

Well, but I must say a word to you, my friends, who have obeyed—yes, it may be but in a half-hearted, loitering way—each word of command,—who are the ' sons of God ' by His own word (John i. 12); and who have *the right* to talk with your Father in heaven, and to tell Him all you want. Soldiers have not many opportunities for kneeling down to pray, especially on active service; just a few minutes perhaps in the morning;—and before noon, the swift summons may have come in the *sh'ng* of

a viewless bullet. ‘He hadn’t time for a prayer,’ says one, of the Christian comrade whose name is among the ‘casualties’ here,—and has been ‘called’ in heaven. No, and *God knew he would not*, as that man rose from his knees: do you think the prayer would not last out the morning? ‘No condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus!’ In the Service, or out of it, we cannot always be praying. I know there is the command, ‘Pray without ceasing,’ but that regards rather the spirit, than the attitude, or the words, of prayer. We have all of us work to do, and mostly a man’s mind as well as his muscle must be thrown into his work, if it is to be thoroughly done: together, they make up his ‘might;’ and we have a Bible command, ‘Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.’ Daniel prayed we are told, ‘three times a day;’ between those times, he was a hard-working, often no doubt, much harassed, Prime Minister. Do you or I believe that he was not then, in the thick of his work, as ready for the lions, or anything else, as when he was on his knees? (Romans viii. 1; 1 Thessalonians v. 17; Ecclesiastes ix. 10; Daniel vi. 10).

Many of you who will as I hope, read my little book, are fathers. Suppose now, a child of yours had asked you in the morning, to give

him something he greatly wanted, and you had promised it should be his, would you have expected, or indeed wished, him to ask you for it again before half the day was out? God's promises go before our prayers; over and over again has He promised eternal life to as many as ask Him for it—just ask simply, and *because they do want it*—for Christ's sake;—and does not Christ want the souls He bought? *He says He does* (Luke xv. 1-7; John xvii. 24). And shall we dare to say, wretched and unworthy though we be, we *do not wonder at it*—at this seeking, yearning love of the Saviour's? He *died for us*: remembering *that*, it is indeed what we might have expected of Him. To lose us after all! Why, you would think a great deal of the poorest thing you had offered *your life* to save.

Say, I wanted any one of you to do something for me; and came and stood before you, speaking never a word. I think you would say, rather impatiently perhaps, yet very naturally, 'My good friend, do tell me what it is you want.' Isn't *this* a wonderful word for us—'Before they call I will answer'? Only God could say that, but will it not do grandly for us, alike in our powerless wanting, and in our swift extremity? 'The Captain of our Salva-

tion ' knows, and calls by name, and looks after, every one who serves under Him, and when one of *His own* has no moment for a prayer, or, weary and brain-sick, cannot speak a word to Him; He hears the unspoken words, and shapes the ungathered thoughts into an accepted prayer; and answers it in the fulness of His own all-wise, tender love!

There is one of God's *shalls* that we have not, I think, looked at, one of those marvelously strong texts given us to *hold on to*—His utter mercy for utter need—first spoken out by one of the old Prophets in 'a day of darkness and gloominess,' echoed by Peter in the ears of those who had 'by wicked hands, crucified and slain' Christ; and repeated by Paul to his Roman converts—'Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' The marvelous declaration is made thrice, as though the Lord would say, 'I do mean it, you poor sinners on the very edge of destruction, and so I call out to you three times.' Very wonderful the words are, but in those others we have been speaking of, as in that precious command—'Look unto Me and be ye saved,'—'utter' becomes 'uttermost.' A dumb prayer, a dim heart-look, where there is no breath for a heart-cry, may bring instant mercy, instant calm. God is ever looking down from heaven, watch-

ing and waiting for the poor sinner's thought and glance,—but dear friends, we must none of us forget, there *may not* be the moment *for even that* in the end ; though along many years, God has waited, and longed, and striven. His fuses burn very, very slowly, but *they always meet the charge* (Isaiah lxv. 24 ; xliii. 1 ; Joel ii. 32 ; Acts ii. 21 ; Romans x. 13 ; Isaiah xlv. 22)!

'Ready'—that's a Bible *command*, that goes before a very solemn warning (Matthew xxiv. 44). Keep all packed in readiness for the route; and *then*, if you will, you may sit quietly down and wait for the summons: no flurry, no fear. Stay though, 'Keep all packed!' I think I've made a mistake here. *Have nothing to take*—that's the best preparation for the last swift journey. All our sins, with all our miserable goodness bound up in the 'filthy' bundle, brought to Christ, to be cast behind His back ; our souls brought to Him for safe keeping—and we are quite 'ready.' *The river* will not be much, with His hand in ours.

Just one other word on this all-important question of *the coming*. It does not matter the least bit what we think, or feel, or 'know,' apart from what *God says*. In His assurances, *and in them alone*, stands all our assurance. Yet all of us who have proved God—

which He most wonderfully *commands* us to do—are *very sure* that He knows and answers prayer, whether it be the unworded cry of the awakening soul's bewildering agony, or the restful telling of the children's wants. Every prayer that goes from earth, 'counts one to the devil's loss;' never come back to us prayers from Heaven, as our letters sometimes return from the 'Dead Office,' *undelivered*. Only you try it, any of you, who have done without prayer, and without Christ, till now, and very soon you will be able to tell your comrades and friends who 'didn't believe in that sort of thing,' as your brother soldier David has told everybody, '*This poor man* cried, and the Lord heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles.' It will be 'as good as a sermon,' depend upon it (Malachi iii. 10; Psalm xxxiv. 6; cxvi. 1-4, 8, 13, 14).

Not but what you'll have too, to tell of hard wrestling and weary watching; ah, we have a *command* here—a one-word order from our Saviour's own lips—'Watch'! (Mark xiii. 37). Not only is Satan awfully strong: his arrangements are so dangerously complete. We said, you know, that we could not turn his position: neither can he ours; though he will try, be sure, many a stealthy flank movement; nor yet, thank God, intercept our communications,—'A

stronger than he' keeps them open for us—but he is so terribly well informed about us. He knows all the weak places, that are for ever giving way—we shall need to double-guard these constantly;—that's a deep saying, 'a chain is only as strong as its weakest links.' No disguise is too contemptible, no device too miserable for the enemy, if only he can steal upon us. In our warfare with Satan, there will be plenty of sentry-duty, and we must be ever on the alert for a stealthy step, and ready with our challenge—or our fire.

During a war with some tribe of Red Indians many years since, only a single man could be spared from the white men's small force, for picket duty at some point; and two or three who in turn had occupied the post, were 'missing.' The third man detailed for it, evidently did not half like the duty, and another volunteered to take his place, and started for his uncanny post, with the simple, comprehensive determination, to *fire at anything and everything that showed*. For the first hour of his watch all was quiet, when he heard a little rustling sound, and from the belt of forest a few score yards distant, a peccary came cautiously into the open, as though in search of food. The sentry watched it with interest for some minutes, careful by no sound to scare the creature which

had relieved the monotony of his solitary guard. He fancied it was working round him rather strangely, but only marked this as some curious habit of the animal he had not before observed; when *his resolve* flashed into his mind, and he raised his rifle—only to lower it again immediately,—it seemed so very absurd a thing to fire at a wild pig. How the others would laugh at him, if they came, on hearing the report,—and the creature interested him too. ‘Fire at everything that showed, that’s what *I said I’d do*,’ was his half-spoken thought, and with a quick and almost careless aim, he fired. With a yell of fierce rage and agony, the Indian, who had thus cunningly disguised himself, sprang into the air, and fell dead. He knew then his comrades’ fate, and how near, his own.

‘We are not ignorant of his devices,’ said a wary as valiant warrior of old. Paul knew what a subtle foe he had to contend with, and he went the right way about, to prevent Satan getting the advantage of him, ‘praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance;’ and in the same passage he tells us, ‘The sword of the Spirit—is the Word of God.’ Satan would have been ‘too many for’ even the great apostle alone (Luke xi. 22; 2 Corinthians ii. 11; Ephesians vi. 17, 18).

All our vigilance, as well as our might and our 'good courage,' come to us through God's Holy Spirit; whom we must *have*, no less than His dear Son:—we must put these texts side by side—'He that hath not the Son of God hath not life; If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.' And since it is so, we get the plain, free, unconditioned promise of this great gift, for the asking. I suppose we might say, the very first prayer of the awakened soul should be just this short one, 'Lord, give me Thy Holy Spirit, for Christ's sake.' It is sure to be granted—the *very gift asked for*, and in this granting is given Christ Himself.

And the Holy Spirit brings His sword with Him, 'the Word of God,'—and will teach us how to handle it. Why, *without His teaching*, dear friends, our Bible will be but so much wonderful history and beautiful writing, and I want all yours to be *live Bibles*, that talk to you straight from God, of His 'everlasting strength,' and 'salvation,' and 'righteousness,' and 'consolation,' and 'light,' and 'life,' all gathered and sure, in the 'everlasting love.'—God is love (1 John v. 12; Romans viii. 9; Luke xi. 13; John xvi. 14; Isaiah xxvi. 4; xlv. 17; Psalm cxix. 142; 2 Thessalonians ii. 16; Isaiah lx. 20; John vi. 47; Jeremiah xxxi. 3; 1 John iv. 8, 16).

Just a thought of the Love, brothers !
Of that wondrous, compelling Love,
That might not stay in unclouded day,
In His palace home above.
Could not rest in the golden glory,
Thrilled and swept by the angel-song ;
While the shadows on earth lay cold and drear,
And the death-lights of hell were flickering near
An unresting, moaning throng.

You and I in that terrible crowd, brothers,
That the Love pressed down to meet :
Our lips moaned low in the rayless woe—
Those fierce fires came near *our* feet.
For you and for me that Love was lone,
Lifted up in earth's foulest scorn :
When heaven stood aghast at the awful cry,
Your voices, my voice, shrieked 'Crucify,'—
Our hands took nail and thorn.

We must claim that bitter sin, brothers,
That the Love, too, we may claim ;
He only might save through the cross and the grave ;
We may only bear our shame.
Love that sorrowed, and wept, and died for us,
'Will in no wise cast out' one :
Love strikes down our foes in life's sternest fight,
And quiets our hearts in its stormiest night,—
And that Love is waiting on !

We must give back love for Love, brothers :—
A grain for a world, when given ;
But the Love 'we have known' makes the grain His
own,
And 'tis called full weight in heaven !

Shall we *just obey His orders*

In the march, and the halt, and the strife ?
Flashed by sun-signal on our dim sight,
Love's orders reach us through Love's own light,
Words of undying life.

We so wearied the Love by our sin, brothers,
In the darkening path we trod.

Oh ! we seem to have striven to shadow His heaven,—
And to break the heart of God !

Still, brothers, for us held on the Love,

Strong to bear—full, free, to give :
No black, deep waters can quench Love's fire ;
But the Love we never may here outtire,
We eternally may outlive !

CHAPTER VI.

THE '91ST.'

NOT the gallant regiment which bears that number, but the grand old Psalm. What a wonderful psalm it is! I have always felt that the man who can call it *his very own*, may just wrap that glorious psalm round him; and happy and unfearing, step down into the deepest gloom, or the hottest danger;—and with all its clarion ring, and battle-clash, and sweep of mighty angel-wings; as tender and trustful as the sweet 23rd itself! It is endeared to me by strange and grateful memories: I recollect how once, at a time when for some weeks I had not access to my Bible, I used to try and get it all back: I never did; but even a few of its remembered words will strengthen a man 'a lot.' Do you know? I wish all of you would get it by heart, so as to have it always *ready to put on*—it's so distinctively the soldier's psalm—and a soldier penned it.

Now, don't say, 'He's going to give us a regular sermon to finish with,' because I'm not going to do anything of the sort, notwithstanding my chapter-heading. I couldn't preach or write 'a regular sermon' for the life of me—I tell you that for your comfort. But don't you hear all through that noble psalm, the swell of a 'Hurrah,' that lifts the heart as we read it; and shall we not, dear fellows, you and I together, try to get from its words of strength and of high heartening, thoughts that shall nerve us for all that may lie before us?

You hear too, *the ring of our commands* in it, I am sure. 'My refuge'! 'My God'! He who says that, *has obeyed*—no fear of it. But I want you especially to note, in connection with what we have been talking about, the plain, strong declaration—none plainer nor stronger in all the Bible—'He shall call upon Me, and I will answer Him;' and the 'because' that comes twice over in the preceding verse. Those last three verses are most remarkable; David is suddenly silent, and his God speaks. They are like the wonderful soft notes—a change to a minor it would perhaps be called—swelling in some grand anthem, through the echo of the triumph-chorus. Close upon the conquering tread of the 12th and 13th verses, as a sweet surprise melody, come the resting words, 'Be-

cause he hath set his love upon Me:—The warrior poet is telling out all that God is to himself and to others, of strength, and safety, and high courage for the fight; and he must pause in the swift fulness of his exultation, to hear the Lord tell how in that lofty trust, He recognises the love—and something more.

We spoke, you remember, of *the Name*—good for everything, a little while ago; let us now turn to the 25th Psalm. I say, my friends, is not that a most extraordinary prayer that we read in the 11th verse, 'For Thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great'? Think of some one who had done you grievous wrong; coming to you, and saying, 'Forgive me, for I've injured you bitterly.' A strange plea for forgiveness, that! Someone has finely said, that David was far less brave when he confronted Goliath with his sling and stone, than when he dared to go up to God, with all the blackness of his fearful sin upon him; and in God's own name, claim its forgiveness. *He took God utterly at His word*—that was all. He could make no less of the 'iniquity,'—dark and awful it stared him in the face, and it was 'great;' but he might make no less of GOD than He had declared of Himself—'The name of the Lord—the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and

abundant in goodness and truth—forgiving iniquity and transgression, and sin' (Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7); and so he took the hideous sin to God, and left it with Him! And here, in this glorious 91st Psalm, comes the answer to his daring faith, that has its record in the 25th,—and such an answer! One the wrestling, clinging soul had not dreamed of asking. *He would have pardon*; God is glad that His brave but deeply sinning child *is sure* that no sin can get beyond His love, and He says, 'I will *set him on high* because he hath *known My name*.'

We get the same deep truth in our Saviour's own wondrous sweet story, in which, every time we read it, we find something new and precious; that is told us in the 15th chapter of Luke—the 'Little Gospel within the Gospel,' as an early Christian writer calls it. That squalid wanderer in the starved out swineherd's rags, the reckless 'younger son' who 'had spent all,' does not forget he *is* a son. He begins his plaintive prayer, 'Father.' He pleads indeed for bare forgiveness; but before he can get to that part of the poor speech he had made up in the 'far country,' and had no doubt often said over to himself in his weary tramp towards home, 'Make me as one of thy hired servants;' those very servants are bidden to bring out for him the best robe, the ring, all the choicest

things in the Father's home. Alike in the psalm and in the gospel, the prayer that claims pardon for the Name's sake, gets 'exceeding abundantly above all' its asking (Ephesians iii. 20).

Suffer here, dear friends, just a word of earnest, affectionate warning. 'Let us fear' with grateful awe, ever lightly to 'take in vain' this Name, of such wondrous all pardoning, all giving, preciousness and power. As dear, quaint George Herbert, who lived about two centuries and a-half ago, says:—

'Play not away the virtue of that name,
Which is thy best stake, when griefs make thee tame.'

We have indeed a plain prohibition, which is but a negative *command*, in this matter (Exod. xx. 7); and a solemn declaration of the guilt and the danger of disregarding it:—Rather, let the thought of *all that Name is to us*, assure our loving watchful reverence.

God with us—God for us! If this is our psalm, these are our certainties.

We may sometimes feel as though there was not a bit of fight left in us—not, indeed, that we have laid down our arms, but that our hands are powerless to grasp them. What a strong thought of comfort, then, that *God is finishing the battle for us*. When it has terribly seemed as though

you *must* commit some horrid old sin that has had you down times without number, and yet—*it is not committed*:—Ah! friends, could you but have seen, as the fierce desire suddenly went from you, the dark hosts of your soul's foes swept back by the rallied might of heaven; you would have marvelled, truly, that such power was put forth for so poor and vile a thing, but not, that you *could not* 'do the things that you would' (Galatians v. 16, 17).

I do want you, in the words of a child, to get 'all the real' out of this glorious psalm. I like so to remember how a poor wounded fellow (he was shot through the lungs, if I recollect rightly, and died soon after) did this. I was reading to him *our Psalm* in his own language, sitting with him in the straw, in a hastily knocked-up little ambulance; and as I ended the fifth verse, the dear fellow spoke out with a sudden effort, and a quick light in the dimming eye,—'It's the bits of shell—that.' *It was taking it in so.*

Yes, from shaft or shell, quite safe—'it shall not come *nigh* thee,' if the Lord will have you as His comrade in the field; till His time comes for setting on high, one who has *known His name*.

But those 'ten thousand,' who 'shall fall—at thy right hand'—how about them? Their destruction is as terribly certain, as your safety is blessedly sure; and yet, they are 'at thy

side'! It looks as though they were in the same ranks. Why should they fall, and you stand unhurt? If they are in the King's ranks, they have not *obeyed the King's orders*. 'Who is on the Lord's side?' is a question that surely need not be asked, if all who wear His uniform and are mustered beneath His standard, were loyal. *No one supposes* that those who confront the Royal forces in arms, can possibly be 'on the Lord's side.' See to it that each of you has a right to be counted 'a good soldier of Jesus Christ.' There is something more in that, than uniform, and regulation arms, and obedience to routine commands. You may challenge inspection in all these, and yet be 'none of His' (2 Timothy ii. 3; Romans viii. 9).

We hear a good deal about 'Christian charity,' much of which, if Christian anything, is Christian stupidity.—Bible rules, apart from Bible evidence. All I can say is, don't show such Christian charity *to yourselves*. Take the advice so capitally given by good Herbert, whom we have just quoted:—

'By all means use sometimes to be alone.
Salute thyself; see what thy soul doth wear.
Dare to look in thy chest, for 'tis thine own;
And tumble up and down what thou find'st there.'

After all, this is only the old poet's quaint way

of putting a Bible rule of universal application, that Paul had been inspired to give us long before—'Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves' (2 Corinthians xiii. 5). Make sure that you have, and are, the real thing—that your religion will stand fire. All shams are wretched, contemptible things; but a sham *religion* is an awful thing. Fancy a line of stern-looking fortifications, all made up of stucco and painted planks,—and the foe pounding away at them in grim earnest! And isn't Satan terribly in earnest?

They tell a story of the first Napoleon—that he ordered of some Italian armourer a coat of light steel mail, which should be bullet-proof. Receiving this strange army clothier in his armoury at the Tuileries, he asked him to put on the coat of mail, that he might see how it was adjusted, and again demanded whether it was absolutely 'proof.' On receiving the assurance that it was so, the Emperor snatched a brace of pistols from the rack, and let fly, back and front! A miserable sort of thing, of course: none of you fighting fellows would put on such a concern; but Napoleon took the right way to *prove the thing*. Will our religion bear just such a rude test? You and I want something 'on' that 'all the fiery darts' of the devil cannot go through. And Death fires point blank,

at close quarters:—Will your religion stand his single shot? If it won't, it's not the real thing,—it's not a Bible religion,—and it is just worth nothing. The most costly dress is no good, *if the bullets go through*. The Emperor's purple would have been worth nothing on that frightened armourer. It might have looked as well on him as on its owner; but he would have been shot as a sham! 'Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.' *He* is our only true armour; and we not only may, but, you know, we are *commanded* to do this—*It's one of our orders* (Ephesians vi. 16; Romans xiii. 14).

And how *shall* a man who has done this, be a dreary, moping sort of a fellow? It really is very odd—the idea so many people have of Christians. 'Their faces, as long as their talk,—enough to give anyone a fit of "the blues."' More shame to the Christians, if there's a scrap of truth in it. 'All things are yours—things present, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's.' Is *that* assurance one to pull down a man's heart, and face, and take all the life out of him?

'Strong in the Lord.' The man who has *put on Christ* certainly is that; and there is something beyond. '*The joy of the Lord* is your strength;' and the Captain of our Salvation Himself adds, in the promise of His own re-

maining joy,—‘that your joy might be *full*.’ ‘Not full now,’ some may say—‘perhaps filling.’ No, St. Peter did not think so anyhow; ‘full,’ he says, and ‘full of glory,’ even while ‘for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.’ I wish you would read the whole passage, in the first chapter of Peter’s first Epistle, it’s so wonderfully glad and strong.

And the joy, of your own strong, loving Friend, whom you can always go to, when you want help for others! Some one, life-dear to you, whom you cannot possibly be near—many a thousand miles, and many months of duty, are between you—is in sore trouble. There is One who, *as you ask Him*, will be by that far-away bedside, and will whisper words of stronger, deeper tenderness than your own. And that loved comrade of yours—you let him go, without ever hearing of the Saviour, whom you have found so precious; and there is such yearning sorrow in the remembrance. Tell Jesus all about it, how sorry you are, and how sad. Ask Him, Himself to follow and to speak to, that friend of yours, to whom, through shame or sloth, *you* were silent—through another’s lips, if He will. The *star* will not, indeed, be yours, but its lustre shall not be missing in heaven! A living, listening Saviour, your very own Friend, to whom you can talk

out your heart about everything—*just think* what that assurance holds! You're unworthy of such a Friend? Yes, my brother, so utterly unworthy are we—you and I—as we have not words to confess; but if our Royal Leader says to us, 'Ye are My friends' (John xv. 14), we must, however wonderingly, with as deep self-abasement as you will, yet thankfully accept our privileges; but we may not lose sight of the following words of the verse, that bring us back, gladly and loyally, *into the ranks*,—'if ye do whatsoever *I command you!*'

Don't care so much that they shall say of you when you are gone, 'He was a splendid fellow.' That may have been worth winning—in the work that won the words. Still, the 'was' has a hollow, mocking sound—even the V.C. may not be worn 'up there'—unless, indeed, they can add, 'and an out and out Christian' (1 Corinthians iii. 22; Nehemiah viii. 10; John xv. 11; 1 Peter i. 3-9).

'Out and out.' You remember those words? I must venture to give you a few more, from the loyal, loving heart of the same dear friend, that you may not have met with:—

'True-hearted, whole-hearted, faithful and loyal,
King of our lives, by Thy grace we will be!
Under Thy standard, exalted and royal,
Strong in Thy strength, we will battle for Thee!

'True-hearted, whole-hearted! Fullest allegiance,
Yielding henceforth to our glorious King;
Valiant endeavour and loving obedience
Truly and joyously now would we bring.

'Half-hearted, *false*-hearted! Heed we the warning!
Only the whole can be perfectly true;
Bring the whole offering, all timid thought scorning,
True-hearted only if whole-hearted, too.'

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL,
From a Poem in 'Loyal Responses.'

Do you, dear friends of mine, who have to defend your country's liberties, yourselves 'stand fast—in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.' Let *this* high thought hearten you in the soul-strife,—*Your* living Christianity may be the safety of our Motherland. Stern and solemn days may be nearing us—they are surely on the march—in which England's armies shall bear their part, in the fore front of the battle. How grandly would that part be borne—to what assured victory would the steady columns move—were our soon counted thousands 'one army of the living God,' to whom 'it is no restraint—to save by many or by few.' 'Five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight,' says the Lord, of the soldiers who *obey His orders*, That's a strong, quieting thought, is it not—in presence of heavy odds? And the words are

His; and, so, must be as actually true as any we have quoted in our Talk; let those who think nothing of what *God* says about 'an arm of flesh,' say what they will. *Our Leader is everything.* Staunch and gallant troops may have a worthy general, brave and skilful: so had Israel of old; but, as has been well noted, there was One who 'led them by the right hand of Moses *with His glorious arm.*' Moses seemed to lead 'the many thousands of Israel,' but GOD really did. 'The secret of the Lord' is the secret of success (Galatians v. 1; 1 Samuel xiv. 6; Leviticus xxvi. 3, 8; 2 Chronicles xxxii. 8; Jeremiah xvii. 5; Isaiah lxiii. 12; Psalm xxv. 14).

'Not an ally! They stand alone
To meet our gathered powers'—

Oh, ye foolish, vaunting millions, your trebled strength
is ours!

Ay, your Roll is right—your reckoning true
Of bayonets, guns, and swords:—
You count HIM nothing, who simply saith, 'The battle
is the Lord's.'

In every heart a humble prayer,
On each lip a dauntless cry;—
And every man of us shall do; though some of us shall
die.

Kneel to 'the God of battles'!
Then, up—to fight the foe:
What God-led Englishmen can do, a world in arms
shall know.

Wouldn't it be grand, for us to be able to say just that?

Oh dear, I hope you're not *quite* tired of me; there's not much more I want to say—stop a bit, I'm not sure that's exactly true; but *I will not* say much more; and in what I am going to say now, I must ask your patience. *Never be ashamed of your Colours*—not the colours of your regiment; of course, you'd never be ashamed of *them*: why, you would bring them, at your life's risk, out of the hottest press—I know that; and all the laughter of all the idiots in or out of the Service, could not make you for one moment ashamed of the stains and rents that tell how far they have been borne, and how nobly kept. But—well, I hardly know how to call them—for *these* are regimental colours, too—the colours of 'Christ's own'; that the Captain of our Salvation bore through the gates of Hell, in that 'forlorn hope' where none might follow, and that bear only CALVARY on their folds—you must never, never be ashamed of *them*.

Never be ashamed of being found on your knees, or with your open Bible. For the first, there is a striking word in the twelfth chapter of Job, 'I am one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and He answereth him;' and of the Bible, David, you remember, says, 'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light

unto my path.' I say, dear friends, here is a splendid thought for us—a lantern in one man's hand, may light a strange and perilous path for the following steps of a whole detachment! What grand guiding may not your Bible-light give to your groping neighbours, *perchance to some of the mocking ones?* 'Every man shall pitch by his own standard.' That's a Bible command: but when your own standard is raised, and steady, you may help your brother to get up his.

And our Colours must never go back! I am not sure whether it was in the Crimea, or in one of the later Indian campaigns, that a gallant colour-sergeant, who in his ardour had got far in advance of the men, was ordered to bring back the colours to the troops. His reply was a splendid one: 'No, no; bring the troops up to the colours.' You will often be told, very likely, that you are getting too far ahead, making as good men as yourself look backward. *There's your reply*:—these colours only go forward. And there is no 'Retreat' note on God's trumpet. How *could* there be? With Him there is no '*shadow of turning*' (Psalm cxix. 105; Numbers ii. 2; James i. 17).

I have said nothing about *special duties*; but here is one, that is enforced by a *special command*, which brings it before us. 'Remember

the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy.' I fear very many of us are sadly short-memoried over it. And it is enforced altogether for our good; the design really, of *all* God's commands. 'The Sabbath was made for man,'—I suppose those six words of our Lord's have been as often and as miserably misquoted as any in the Bible. People who certainly do not go in for a Scripture rule of life, are immensely fond of them. 'The Sabbath was made for man,' Yes, of course, it was: God tells us so;—'and not man for the Sabbath.' Ay, we need not be a bit afraid of finishing the text. Our keeping the Sabbath holy cannot do the 'Lord of the Sabbath' the least good. 'What receiveth He of thine hand?' But it was made for '*man*;' not only for the poor part of him that can sleep or 'spree' away the Lord's day. What of the other part of him, that must outlive, were it a century of Sundays, however spent? Has *that* no claim to put in for God's given day of rest? Those are most remarkable words that we read in Isaiah, 'If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord honourable; and shalt honour Him, . . . I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth.' We are not *to walk on into Sunday* in the hasty life-tramp. And what a grand pro-

mise *for the stayed foot!* And is it not an amazing thought that we, poor sinners, can thus 'honour' God?

No doubt, there are needs and duties that will occur on the Sabbath, which cannot be set aside, even by the sanctity of the day; and these our Lord has graciously recognised. And they are as likely to arrive in the Service, as out of it. An action may have to be fought on Sunday, though since 'the battle is the Lord's,' surely it is an unwise act ever to fight one that is not urgent, on the *day* that is His. The men of our '91st'—'Christ's own,'—who are in it, may share in no victory; though they shall know that they fight 'under the shadow of the Almighty.' One other thought on this Sunday question. We read in the 4th chapter of Hebrews these words, 'There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.' The word 'rest,' literally translated, would be 'Sabbath keeping.' Now, *would* a heaven that is *all Sunday*, be what many of us would greatly enjoy? Men have such strange vague ideas about Heaven. How often we hear people say lightly, 'When I get to heaven,' who could they get there—might they find themselves with those hopes and hearts of theirs, 'before the throne,'—would exclaim almost in dismay, 'Oh, this wearisome heaven! How they do

keep on singing!' We must ask as earnestly to be made 'meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;' as for our entrance, through Him who is at once 'that light,' and the way into it (Exodus xx. 8-11; Mark ii. 27; Job xxxv. 7; Isaiah lviii. 13, 14; 1 Samuel xvii. 47; Hebrews iv. 9; Revelation vii. 9, 15; Colossians i. 12; John i. 8, 9).

And as I have not spoken about special duties, save this solemnly important one, so, neither have I cared to speak of special sins. We all know for ourselves, those that do 'so easily beset us,' and we know too, that they 'take a deal of killing.' Whatever they are—however vigorous and full of terrible vitality; if we have *obeyed orders*—down they must go!

Only to refer to one fatally dangerous form of sin—none harder to kill—I have often thought, while listening to admirable temperance lectures; of the old axiom, 'The greater includes the less.' Let a man honestly, *meaningly*, ask God for that gift of His Holy Spirit, which he *is quite sure to get*; and by His help, let him *receive* Jesus Christ, and so become a son of God, through the wondrous 'power' of 'His name;' (just do find the passage in the 1st chapter of St. John's Gospel) and any and every sin—'dragon,' 'young lion,' or 'adder'—how suggestive the words are of the varied

shapes of sin we have to do battle with—shall he 'trample under feet.' And so we get back to our Psalm.

'I will deliver him'—yes, we have seen that—'and honour him.' Isn't *that* a very wonderful thing for God to tell us? You would think a great deal of being honoured by our loved Queen; after many a stern and weary campaign, returned, may be, with disabling wounds or shattered health; and it might happen, through no fault of Her Majesty's, that some, who had most nobly earned distinction—never really *won* it—got passed over. But here, the King of kings says He *will* honour everyone in His service, who has simply obeyed His orders—a thought only less marvellous than that other we have glanced at—that *we can honour Him*. Many shall wear upon their breasts the decorations of Heaven, who will say, in prostrate amazement, 'Lord, when have *I* done anything to merit such honour? My poor life has been but a lost career. I never even fairly got to the front.' Well, God, who 'calleth those things that be not as though they were,' and whose 'thoughts are not your thoughts,' may have very different thoughts from ours, respecting failure. Doubtless, we all like to succeed; but there is nothing inherently noble in success; that's a comforting thought for a good many of

us. That was at best *brave failure*, when Peter 'walked on the water, to go to Jesus;' but, I think, when he got back to the boat with his Master, he had a glow at the heart, unfelt by his brother disciples who had never left it. The motto of the New 91st men will certainly be—'Where duty, no danger;' yet duty fulfilled, may not mean victory won; and in the stern life-wrestle Paul tells us something about, though final triumph is indeed certain, there may be many a seeming dreary failure, where defeat was fame—mourned over here, but honoured before the throne (Hebrews xii. 1; John i. 12; Romans iv. 17; Isaiah lv. 8; Matthew xiv. 29; Ephesians vi. 12; Hebrews xii. 4).

Well, I suppose I *really must* now dismiss you, or rather myself. The wish to say something to you that has long lain on my heart, has of late been quickened and deepened, by the impossibility I have deplored, of saying anything *among* some of you. Feebly, and all unworthily, I have yet felt that *I must say it out*; and I have earnestly asked for guidance, that I might be helped to say the right things, and kept from saying wrong ones. And now, it all does seem so poor and *thin*, in the pressing thought of your eternal certainties, and mine—in the thought, that some of those for whom I have

written, will never see the little book—that some even, as I write, are passing within those certainties; yes, and that before the eye of one of you shall rest on these poor words, mine may be looking upon those solemn realities I have ventured to speak of to you! Ours has been a very plain talk. If sometimes my words have seemed almost *too* plain, I shall be forgiven, shall I not, for your belief in the hearty love that is in them? *It is so awfully easy to miss Heaven!* I must believe that many who may read this little book of mine, *have never thought of* the vast, solemn realities it speaks of;—and these things *are* so tremendously real.

Suppose a man all but swept from the rock to which he has clung 'for dear life,' by the fast rising waves; and that you had lowered a stout rope within his grasp. Would you waste one precious breath to ask that man how he was feeling, or what he judged to be the exact depth of the drowning waters rising and surging round him? 'I say, you down there, have you clutched the rope?' Wouldn't *that* be your cry—hoarse and almost rude, as the eager, husky voice might sound; and as that rescued man reached the safe turf of the cliff-brow, *wouldn't* a 'Hurrah' ring from your lips?

I can hope to meet but few of you who will read these pages. I may never grasp the hand

of one. In the wide battlefield of life, the operations are so scattered, and the summons may come swiftly, and soon. My prayer-wish has been that this small talk of ours might be a sort of homely 'handbook' to Heaven, to many of you dear fellows; but it can be *that*, I feel, only through guiding words from God's own Book. That there are many of these in its pages, I am thankful to know. I hope that of what I have written, those who dislike the truths, will yet be compelled to admit, 'He's got Bible for it all;' but there are many other words I want you to make your own; and so, on my last page, I give a number of Bible references, several of which I may call *holding-on-to texts*. I earnestly ask you to find them out for yourselves:—*The search* may bring an interest into some leisure or lonely hour,—and to *get a grip* of many of them. The thought comes upon me with such a solemn awe, that we all *must* meet *just once*, 'in the Day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ' (Romans ii. 16).

The Lord grant that every one of you 'in that day,' when the roll of His army is called in the entering of the city, may shout a joyous 'Here!'

And now, Brothers, a bargain-word at the

end. We hear a good deal just now, about long and short service with the colours, the linking of battalions, and the loss, or otherwise, of *esprit de corps*. Well, the 'big-wigs,' I suppose, must settle all that; only, do let us *Ninety-firsts* all hold together anyhow, and *strengthen one another by hearty prayer*. I utterly believe—I have deep, grateful cause for believing—in prayer for one another. There is a marvellous sense of helpfulness for a man in his sorest stress, in the thought that his Christian sisters and brothers are remembering him on their knees.

Whether *our service with the Colours* seem short or long, *every 91st man* has an assurance that it shall be long enough to 'satisfy' him; and when God *shows* 'His salvation'—when each one of you sees *what a salvation* it has been—how thick the deadly shower that might not 'come nigh' you—how desperate the night attacks of Satan's host upon the 'fortress' God has been holding for you:—Ah, then, the conquering cheer of 'Christ's own' shall wake the golden city's wonder, as its swell of triumph joins in with the never-ending song of the 'ten thousand times ten thousand' that overcame—by the blood of the Lamb (Revelation v. 11; xii. 11)—the mighty 'Alleluia'-hurrah of Heaven—as one after another learns the full

meaning of that amazing promise given to your
battling fellow-soldier, in the days of old :

I will set him on high, because he hath known
MY NAME.

'CHRIST'S OWN.'

JOSHUA x. 14, 42.

THE LORD fought that day for Israel—He now fights for you
and me ;

Though the sun stand not still, as on Gibeon, nor the moon
be stayed to see.

Wherever may be the battle-ground, whatever the rallied
powers,

If we are on Jehovah's side, Jehovah fights on ours.

There were 'mighty men of valour' in Joshua's host of old ;
And each man of might stood up to fight—they did not stay
in hold.

'The Lord Himself is on our side,' well might those soldiers
say ;

But not, 'The Lord fights for us—we need not fight to-day.'

No child's play in the battle—eye to eye, and hand to hand—
Facing tireless, bitter enemies, for very life we stand :

'Mid falling friends and hemming foes, a 'present help' we
claim ;

But we may not rest upon our arms—we must fight on the
same.

In the swirl and sway of the battle-tide, through its hoarse,
loud ebb and swell,

Ever close and clear, the listening ear our Leader's voice can
tell :

One uplook at the Colours, with their blazon of red and
gold,

Will steady our gaze, through the quivering haze, to the Cross
in every fold.

He will lead some out of action, even while smiting down
the foe :—

Why their arm must stay in its bravest sway, they will think
it hard to know :

It may be that in the triumph, strangely lay the victors' loss—
Through the halo-light of the sabre-play, they could not see
the Cross !

All through the day, in the hottest fire, and in the deadliest
close,

At our right hand will our Captain stand, whose arm no
wearying knows ;

And ever, where that 'glorious arm' is lifted in its might,
We shall see in the strong right hand the scars of a fiercer,
sterner fight—

The scars of that fight—in the dark, alone—that He won for
you and for me !

From His silent heaven God's hosts looked down on our
Leader's agony :

And through the Foe's dread city wailed their terrible king's
despair—

We may not brave his power alone ;—but he lost his armour
there !

Dear brothers ! we can never, we *must* never flinch nor
fear :

God leads us ; in our midst He fights, and He protects our
rear !

No retreat-note on His trumpet, only the long 'Recall'

When the battle is done, and the day is won, and the Roll in
heaven has all.

'His desire upon mine enemies'—'tis that each eye shall
see :

God means *His own* to win the strife, though it may be,
wearily.

Some, tired out and badly wounded, reach the camp at close
of day :

A once-wounded hand will tend them, His that led them all
the way.

Not only the wounds, and the weariness—there will be the
deeper pain ;—

'It was but a craven fight we made—it can never be fought
again :

So led !'—and our dear Leader stoops, His own valour's cross
to bring,

Whispers—our names are mentioned in despatches to the
King.

And in the City's entering, in the glory His alone,

Oh ! the wonder of our welcome from our Leader on His
Throne !

Our battle-rent, poor banners borne above the angel throng,
Who hush their loyal harps, to hear the burst of His soldiers'
song !

Through the golden streets, unebbing, pours the mighty
wave of sound ;

Trembles deeper light in each gate of pearl, as the Victor-song
treads round :

' We must fill Thy Heaven with our glory-shout, dear Leader
on Thy Throne !

Or our hearts will break with the utter joy, our Saviour-King,
our own !

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